

EDMONTON'S 100% INDEPENDENT NEWS & ENTERTAINMENT WEEKLY

VUEWEEKLY

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UNIVERSITY OF ALBERTA

APR 5 2007

**DRUGS
DRUGS
DRUGS**

WHICH ARE GOOD?
WHICH ARE BAD?
VUE INVESTIGATES



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VOTE!
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What did
Ghenghis Khan Eat?
What ever he damn
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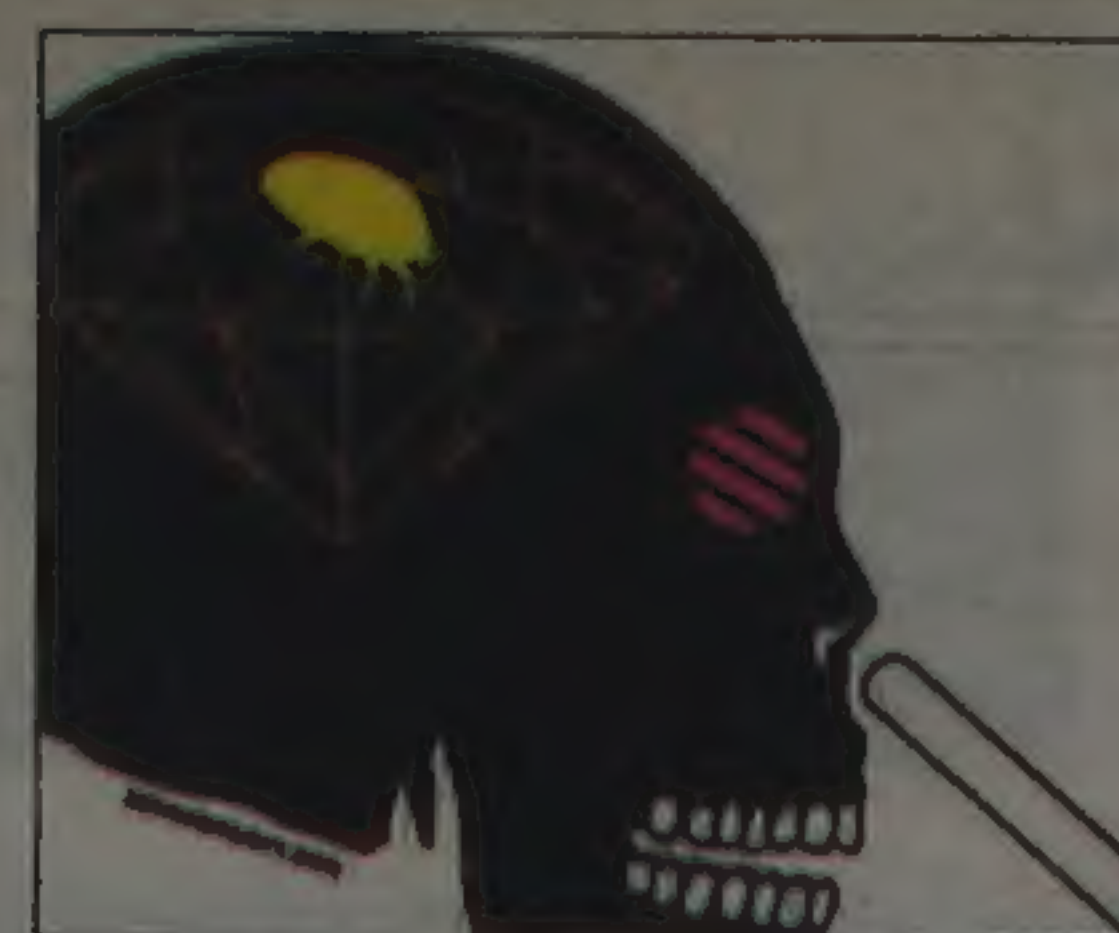
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ON THE COVER



DEVOTED TO THE DOPE

Vue devotes this week's edition to intoxicants, barbiturates, opiates, narcotics and drugs in the hopes of illuminating some issues of substance.

NEWS



PURITY / 5

"If you grow your own tomatoes, you know there's no pesticides in them. Likewise, I'm not a great champion for legalization of marijuana, but if people were permitted to grow their own, it would make a difference in the impurities in it." —Dr David Cook, professor of Pharmacology at the University of Alberta and specialist on drug pharmacology for AADAC

BOOKS



RELEASED / 32

"We talk a lot these days about Islamic fundamentalism, and we rarely talk about Christian fundamentalism and I think that they are equally as dangerous." —Margaret MacPherson, local author

MUSIC



CONSTANTINES / 53

"Horsey Craze is just sort of a lark we came up with in a bar one night. We were on tour and we talked of starting a Neil Young cover band." —Bry Webb, singer/guitarist

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This is your *Vue* on drugs

ROSS MOROZ / ross@vueweekly.com

If you notice a bit of a common thread running through this week's edition of *Vue*, try not to freak out, as it's entirely intentional. You are not high. Well, actually, chances are you might be, which is kind of the point. Based on information both official and anecdotal, it's clear that drugs are, well, everywhere these days. Whether you blame it on the we've-got-money-to-burn, work-hard-and-play-harder attitude pervasive in our currently booming economy or on increasing social acceptance of and openness about recreational drug use, the fact is that more and more people are smoking, snorting or popping all kinds of things for fun in this town, but thanks to the (admittedly dissipating, but still very pervasive) social stigma surrounding the consumption of illicit substances—not to mention the fact that most are still very much illegal in this country—there is a severe lack of frank, dispassionate information available about all of these assorted smokables and snortables and what have you.

This is why we have decided to devote much of this issue of *Vue* to exploring the phenomenon of recreational drug use from a variety of perspectives. Considering how much of this stuff is going on, there is a noticeable dearth of reportage on the subject, and what does get printed tends to fall into the pervading extremist dichotomy—you know, drugs are either “totally harmless and cool, man” or “destroying the very fabric of our society,” depending on who is asked.

The truth, as usual, lies somewhere in between, which is why we have tried to avoid the deeply entrenched biases and assumptions and simply answer some nagging questions we have about the topic, ranging from the admittedly irreverent (how would one go about cooking with marijuana, if one were so inclined?) to the political and academic (why didn't the planned decriminalization of pot ever happen?), from the artistic (how did drugs become so intertwined with popular music, not to mention film and literature?) to the direly important (what does that pill you bought from the kid selling “vitamins” night actually contain?) and everything in between.

It goes without saying that *Vue* is certainly not advocating, endorsing or encouraging potentially dangerous (and, as mentioned, unlawful) behaviour. We are, however, approaching the topic of drugs with the same attitude that has been applied (well, by anyone with any brains, anyway) to another fun taboo—sex—for years now: the more information one has, the safer and more informed one's choices will be. So relax, inhale deeply, try not to cough too much, and see if some of what you thought you knew about drugs doesn't just go up in smoke. ♡

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Higher, faster, stronger ... and higher

ROSS MOROZ / ross@vueweekly.com

The list of chemicals anti-doping officials look for when testing high-performance athletes is long and varied. Substances ranging from potent illegal steroids to many common cold medications are banned, and athletes found with even minute levels of these drugs in their systems face incredibly harsh penalties, including suspension, punishment and the revoking of medals and titles, not to mention the damage done to the reputation of an athlete who is branded as a drug cheat.

This uncompromising punitive approach is justified by the noble goal of protecting the purity of sport and preventing the cheats from gaining an advantage over athletes that follow the rules and remain clean. Few athletes, officials or spectators would ever argue that competitors trying to gain an edge by using illegal and potentially dangerous steroids or other capability-increasing drugs ought not be exposed and severely punished.

But when it comes to substances that do not seem to have any performance enhancing qualities—chiefly marijuana—there is growing debate among anti-doping officials. “Get out of the social drug scene,”

Joanne Mortimore, CEO of Athletics Canada, told CBC News. “Let's stick on high performance drugs and not bother with [marijuana].”

Her comments echo sentiments expressed by sport and government representatives from the Netherlands and the United Kingdom who recently called for an end to testing athletes for pot use.

Joseph de Pencier of the Canadian Centre for Ethics in Sport, which handles the testing of athletes in

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Canada, agrees with the idea in theory, although he warns that getting the worldwide athletics community on board with the proposal might be difficult.

“I don't think it's a fight that Canada and some other countries are going to win about getting cannabis off the list altogether,” he told the CBC. “I think we're just whistling in the wind on that one.”

PERHAPS UNSURPRISINGLY, the highest-profile athlete who ever faced punitive action for testing positive for cannabis agrees that the ban on marijuana ought to be ended.

“There's no real reason for it to be on the list in the first place,” 1998 Olympic gold medalist Ross Rebagliati told *Vue* from Whistler, where he is currently training in hopes of competing at the 2010 Olympics.

“I think that the IOC [International Olympic Committee] and everybody else related to the list of banned substances is mainly concentrating on maintaining a fair and level playing field for everybody,” he continued. “There's no evidence to suggest that marijuana is in any way a performance enhancing drug, so they're really kind of, in my mind and in the minds of a lot of people, over-stepping the boundaries from fair play into social activities that are irrelevant.”

While Rebagliati deftly deflected questions about his own use of marijuana, he emphasized that, regardless of the morality or legality of smoking pot, its prohibition in sport misses the point of testing athletes for drugs.

“There shouldn't be anything else involved in [drug testing] other than to make it fair for the other athletes,” he insisted. “It's not a social thing; it's not to check if you're a good person or a bad person.”

“It's fair for the other athletes,” Rebagliati added. “That's the whole point.” ♡

Wait ... you mean weed's not legal yet?

DECRIMINALIZATION REMAINS A PIPE DREAM IN CURRENT POLITICAL CLIMATE

MURRAY SINCLAIR / murray@vancouverweekly.com

It was the subject of international hype a few years ago: the great liberal northern bastion of Canada was planning to decriminalize marijuana, snubbing its nose at its neo-conservative southern neighbour's War on Drugs.

But the Liberal government that introduced the proposed decriminalization law let it die, and its Conservative successor has promised not to revive it.

Nonetheless, marijuana advocates can still see the criminal prohibition of pot being chiseled away through court cases, economic changes and the simple on-the-ground reality.

"The Conservatives definitely set it back, but there are many things happening," said Ched Ander, an Edmonton pot activist.

Decriminalization should not be confused with legalization, which would remove all legal penalties and fines against growing, selling, possessing and using marijuana.

It also shouldn't be mixed up with the legal use of marijuana for medical purposes, which the federal government permitted after an Ontario court decision in 2000.

Health Canada reacted to the ruling with a set of regulations on consuming medical marijuana, even contracting a supplier to produce dried pot and seeds in an old Manitoba mine-shaft.

THE MOST RECENT POLITICAL push to decriminalize pot for general use began in late 2002, when a Senate committee suggested that marijuana was less harmful than alcohol and should be regulated in a similar way.

A House of Commons committee followed up by suggesting that criminal charges were too harsh of a penalty for possessing small amounts of marijuana, and suggested decriminalizing possession of less than 30 grams.

The bill originally tabled in May 2003 under former Liberal Prime Minister Jean Chrétien decreed that possession of less than 15 grams should be legalized, but that legislation died on the order paper in the House.

A marijuana reform bill was introduced again in February 2004 and again that November under the minority government of Chrétien's successor, Liberal Prime Minister Paul Martin. Martin promised the law would be a priority but it never got past the committee stage.

"The Government of Canada believes that while cannabis use must be discouraged, possession of small amounts should not result in a criminal record," read a news backgrounder on the last Liberal bill.

It called for a \$150 fine for adults and a \$100 fine for youths caught with up to 15 grams of marijuana, and a \$300 fine for adults and a \$200 fine for youths for possession of one gram or less of cannabis resin or hashish. The fines would have gone

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up to \$400 for adults and \$250 for youths in possession of these amounts while operating a vehicle, committing a serious crime or if found in or near a school.

Possession of between 15 and 30 grams would have either resulted in fines or six months in jail and/or a fine up to \$1 000 for repeat offenders at the discretion of the police officer and the court.

"These reforms would also increase accountability among offenders, who would get a ticket instead of a simple warning, as is the case for about half of the individuals police find in possession of cannabis," a press release said at the time.

The last Liberal bill proposed to replace the penalty for growing pot, which is punishable by up to seven-years imprisonment, with a sliding scale depending on the amount grown.

One to three plants would have resulted in a \$500 fine, halved for youths, while growing four to 25 could have landed growers in jail up to five years, and more than 50 could have meant 14 years.

John Conroy, an Abbotsford, BC lawyer with the National Organization for the Reform of Marijuana Laws in Canada, said he didn't support the Liberal proposal.

"It would have resulted in even more people being charged" for pot offences, he said.

True decriminalization would mean turning over pot laws to the provinces, which are responsible for non-criminal statutes like motor-vehicle regulations, Conroy added.

Ander said the only good aspect of the proposed Liberal law was that certain people caught with pot would end up with no criminal record.

But he said the law did nothing to deal with the many problems that have popped up relating to growing and obtaining marijuana for medicinal purposes.

Many doctors are still hesitant to prescribe pot and insist on pharmaceutical products, a decision that Ander said treats patients like guinea pigs instead of letting them use a known treatment.

He spoke of one spina bifida patient who was denied pot to help his condition in favour of the pharmaceutical oxycodone and then became addicted to that drug.

EDMONTONIAN ACTIVIST Ken Ealey said medical growers selling pot for compassion at a lower price have run afoul of organized crime gangs selling it for profit, with sometimes-fatal consequences.

Ealey, who found marijuana treated his migraines after trying a series of pharmaceuticals, called the Liberal law "a cop out."

"It was another cash grab," added

Ander, pointing to its series of fines.

He said the Western Canadian underground marijuana industry generates about \$5 billion in revenue, which trickles up to the above-ground economy, benefiting governments in general.

His views mirror those of the conservative Fraser Institute, which predicted that legalizing and taxing cannabis would generate \$2 billion in

office.

Karl Belanger, a press secretary for NDP Leader Jack Layton, said his party does include marijuana decriminalization in its policy book, but advocates health-based harm-reduction policies.

"This includes accessible treatment ... and a review of the negative impacts and social and economic costs of prohibitionist policies that

"Politicians only do stuff that gets them re-elected.

They don't have the guts to [decriminalize marijuana]."—John Conroy, NORML

revenue for the BC government alone.

But Prime Minister Stephen Harper's Conservatives are taking a law-and-order approach, after being elected on a platform that includes mandatory minimum prison sentences and large monetary fines for serious drug offenders, including marijuana.

Nobody from the opposition Liberals responded to *Vue's* questions on whether the party's pot position had changed since it was voted out of

criminalize drug users and exacerbate community impacts," he said.

The NDP point-person for drug policy, Vancouver MP Libby Davies, plans to introduce a motion in Parliament "to focus national attention on the need for policy and law reform concerning illegal drug use," Belanger added.

A subgroup within the party, eND-Prohibition, seeks to legalize marijuana and replace the "war on drugs" with a non-punitive system based

upon accurate education, reduction of harm, regulated access and responsible use," said its website.

NORML's Conroy dismisses political promises to decriminalize, recalling how the Liberals broke past pledges going back to the 1970s under former prime minister Pierre Trudeau.

"Politicians only do stuff that gets them re-elected," he said, fingering all the parties for not reforming the pot laws. "They don't have the guts to do it."

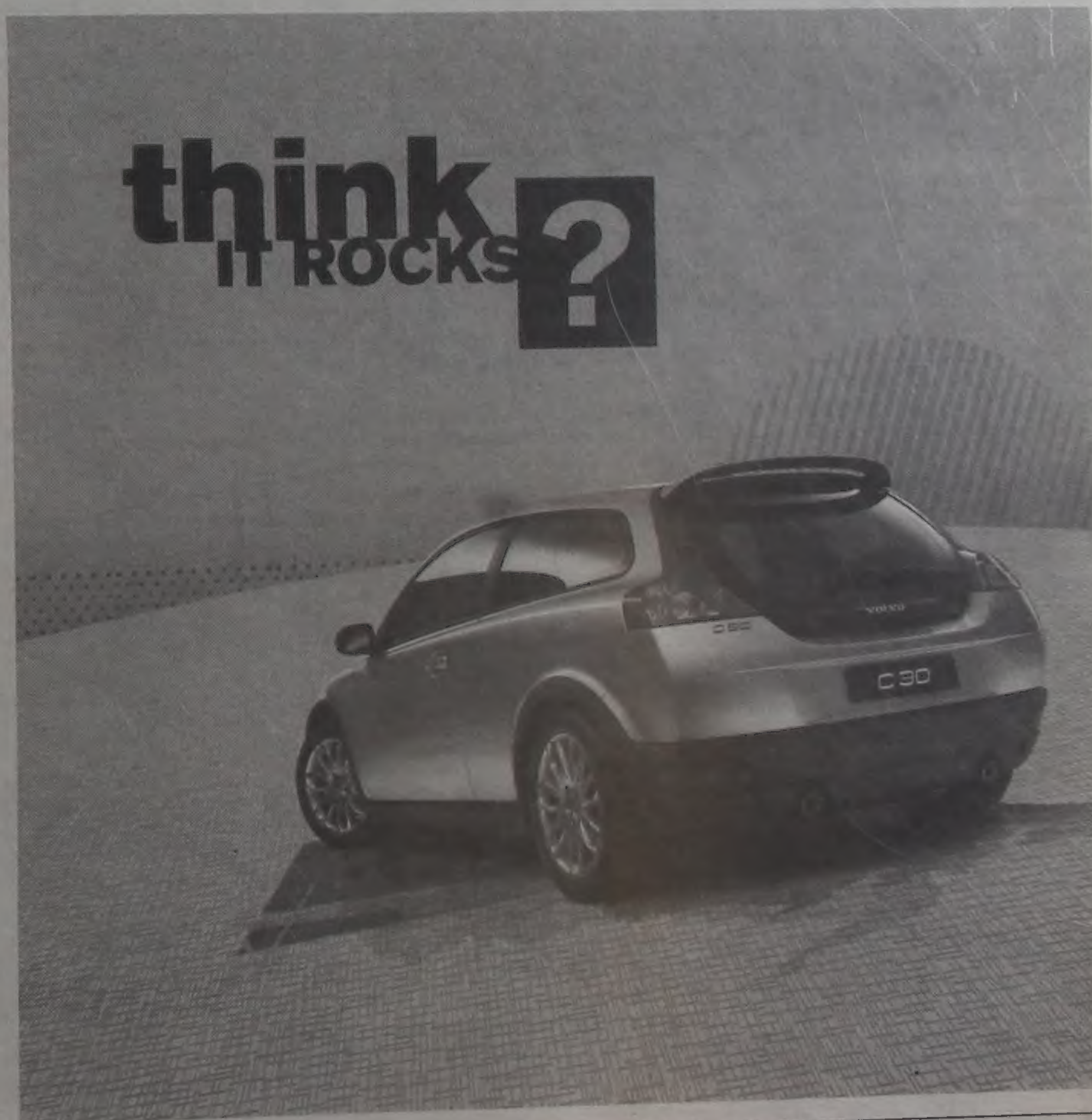
Conroy doesn't see decriminalization as being an issue in any upcoming national election as "most people don't care at all. Most think it's legal."

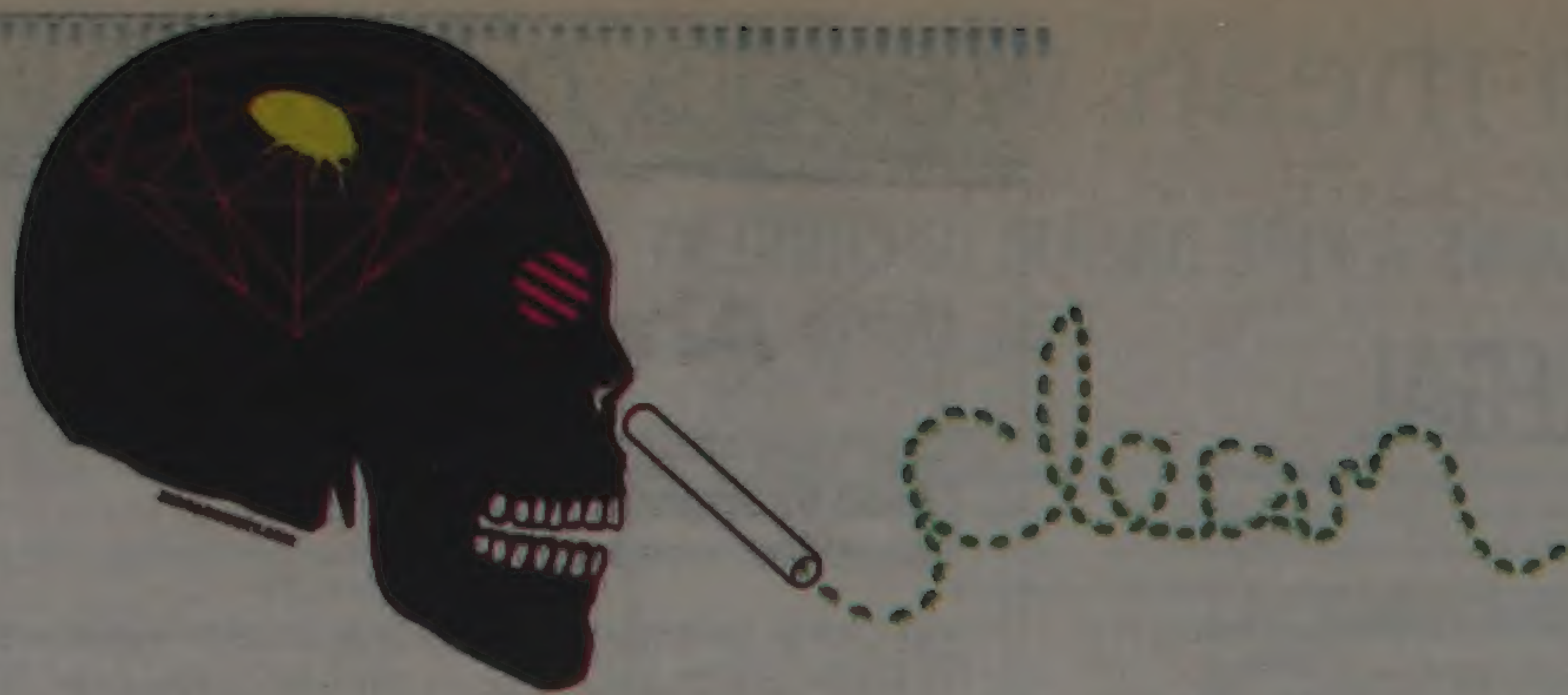
The lawyer said there's been a gradual lessening of marijuana penalties, with offences that would result in jail time 30 years ago netting a \$100 fine today.

Courts just can't get excited about pot prosecutions, he said, as they are more preoccupied with violent and property crimes.

The activists favour legalization, but say marijuana must also be regulated to ban additives and ensure quality and ought to be kept out of the hands of tobacco companies.

"I do worry," Ander said, concerned that these companies would glamorize pot and push it on children. "That would be disgusting." ▼





'You have no absolutely no idea what you're consuming'

VUE DISCOVERS THAT YOU CAN'T ALWAYS GET WHAT YOU WANT WHEN BUYING DRUGS ON THE STREET

JOEL KELLY / joel@vueweekly.com

In this day and age, practically everything we consume is scrutinized with a skeptical eye for additives. We buy organic and local food, we drink bottled water, we read alternative independent newspapers. But when it comes to our stash, well, that's another story.

According to Richard Laing—an analytical specialist in clandestine drug labs for Health Canada and manager of the laboratory responsible for drug seizure analysis for Western Canada, including Edmonton—local drug users should be wary. On the phone from his Burnaby office, Laing rattles off a list of chemicals and additives commonly found added to the major illegal drugs, ranging from the harmless (including dimethylsulfone, a nutritional supplement often found in methamphetamine) to the addictive (such as crystal meth, which shows up in many other drugs such as marijuana and cocaine) to the downright deadly (like strychnine, sometimes found in heroin).

The worst drug for containing nasty additives? Ecstasy, by far, explains Laing. "Ecstasy is cut with almost anything," he said. "We've seen MDMA [the pure, unadulterated form of ecstasy] containing crystal meth, ketamine [a horse tranquilizer], PCP, as well as caffeine and all kinds of sugars. All kinds of stuff."

Laing also sees analogues of MDMA, including PMA and PMMA, being passed off as ecstasy. "These are related to ecstasy but they don't give the same effects," he explained. "The dosage level you need to get high for these drugs is very close to the actual overdose dosage."

THIS ISN'T TO SAY THAT other drugs are even close to pure. Cocaine in particular is often cut with local anesthetics novocaine and lidocaine. These anesthetics mimic cocaine's numbing effect on mucous membranes rather than simply adding to the net weight of the drug like sugar, another popular impurity. However, Laing notes that a rising trend is for coke to be cut with the cardiac drug diltiazem, medically used to treat hypertension. Diltiazem is thought to counteract the cardiac effects of cocaine, which can pose headaches for doctors trying to treat cocaine overdoses.

Parallel to this development, Laing observes a marked shift in how users are getting their high from the drug.

"Ten years ago, we saw 90 per cent [of users doing] coke—now it's somewhere around 50 to 55 per cent crack," he said. Crack's ascent in popularity in Canada could have serious societal impact, as Laing lists cocaine as the second-most popular recreational drug, right behind marijuana.

Obviously, at the most basic level, a dealer's incentive to adulterate their product is clear:

NEWS PURITY

more weight equals more profit. However, this phenomenon has many facets to it, and can be a revealing glimpse into the complex, ever-changing world of the illegal drug trade. The harsher the penalties for selling or possessing a drug, the more likely a dealer is to try to cut as much as they can into it, and the less likely a user is to question what it is they are getting into.

Conversely, Laing sees the opposite effect, when a drug suddenly becomes easily available at higher purity, as just as deadly.

"Users have a certain concentration that they are accustomed to using. 'Hotcapping' is when they get a much higher purity, and that can cause an OD," he explained. "In the mid-'90s, we had an incident where heroin went from 12-14 per cent to almost 60 per cent in around four to five months. Over the next six to eight months, it caused 600 overdose deaths in BC. People hear that the pure stuff is out there, and they want to try it."

Dr David Cook, professor of Pharmacology at the University of Alberta and specialist on drug pharmacology for AADAC, observes that dealers will cut their drugs with "whatever they can get away with."

"People will say, 'I trust my dealer,'" Cook said, "but if you really do think that, I have a bridge I'd like to sell you."

Cook explained that many dealers are lacing marijuana with crystal meth in the hopes of getting their clients addicted. "I suspect that the reason meth is being cut into pot is that if people like it, they're more likely to become addicted to it," he said. "If I'm dealing drugs, clearly there's an advantage to getting my client addicted to it."

Cook's views are echoed by Sgt Ian Sanderson, drug and organized crime awareness service coordinator for the Alberta RCMP.

"The bottom line is that it is for criminal profit," said Sanderson. "The traffickers are not generally users, so they don't care what's in them."

MIXING DRUGS TOGETHER may make sense from a dealer's economic perspective, but drug interactions remain dangerously—though understandably—an unknown area of pharmacology.

"Every drug that works in the brain interacts with every other drug that works in the brain," Cook explained. "We simply don't know everything that's going on, because we can't do the studies."

For instance, cocaine and alcohol consumed together react in the liver to form cocaethylene, a synthetic cousin of cocaine. Cocaethylene lasts longer in the body, and some studies have shown that it is more toxic than cocaine, partic-

ularly to the heart.

Cook also warned that the people conducting these quasi-experiments rarely have any background in the pharmacology they're screwing around with, citing the case of the "Frozen Addict" as an example.

In 1982, a group of amateur chemists tried to synthesize analogues of the narcotic opiod Demerol and were spectacularly unsuccessful. Cook explains that instead, the chemists made a compound called MPTP, which was found to efficiently attack dopamine receptors in the brain, rapidly giving users symptoms of Parkinson's disease.

"You could tell exactly how far this drug had been distributed because you never ever see people in their 20s with Parkinson's," said Cook.

Interestingly, this case did not end entirely in tragedy—subsequent research on MPTP led to the discovery of L-dopa, the current popular treatment for Parkinson's patients.

Cook says the presence of deadly contaminants in recreational drugs raises the thorny issue of legalization.

"If you grow your own tomatoes, you know there's no pesticides in them. Likewise, I'm not a great champion for legalization of marijuana, but if people were permitted to grow their own, it would make a difference in the impurities in it," he said.

However, Cook admits that it's an extraordinarily difficult issue, and there are many complicating factors outside of the drug's chemical components.

Sgt Sanderson agrees, citing the cash crop of marijuana as an example.

"Marijuana use doubled between 1994 and

2004 in Canada; the perception of the harm of the drug went down during that time," he said. "The majority of marijuana that is grown here doesn't stay here in Canada. If you legalize it, is that going to go away?"

Sanderson also noted that exported marijuana is often exchanged for cocaine, crystal meth and guns.

Yet, as pharmacology professor Cook points out, in some cases, legalization has been tried—and has worked.

"We already do it with opiates [like] methadone and heroin," he said, explaining that in the UK doctors have been able to prescribe heroin to addicts since the 1920s. In doing so, Cook states that the government has removed any profit incentive for the dealer.

"There's no point in getting an addict, because you've just lost a customer," he said, adding that this has led to low levels of heroin use in England.

However, Cook is hesitant to extend his argument to all recreational drugs. "The difficulty with other agents is that people have tried to look at if you can do this effectively and the results aren't particularly encouraging. Methamphetamine and cocaine doesn't seem to work; the drugs have considerable physiological impacts by themselves," he said. "The idea that all we've got to do is give the drugs to the addict is too simplistic."

"We've tended to overstate the risks of drug abuse," Cook admitted, "but the one universal problem which is true of any uncontrolled substance, with no governmental control over the content, is that you have no absolutely no idea what you're consuming." ▽

Drugs, drugs, drugs ... which are good, which are bad?

So, how much THC really is in that grubby little baggie you keep hidden at the back of your freezer? According to Richard Laing, analytical specialist for Health Canada, high-quality weed contains anywhere from 10 to 15 per cent THC.

"That's good bud," Laing said, and while he states that his lab does not track statistics on geographical origin of the drugs they are analyzing, he does say that his results are in keeping with national averages for purity. BC bud? It's a myth.

However, Laing does say that marijuana is rarely found with introduced impurities in it.

"There are no contaminants in marijuana," he assured. "There might be pesticides in trace quantities, but we're not looking for it."

Harder drugs can range wildly in purity, based on means of production and contaminants intro-

duced. According to Laing, cocaine is typically around 80 per cent. Heroin purity has fluctuated, but these days is usually at about 50 per cent purity. Ecstasy contains around 65-80 mg MDMA per tablet, with the rest comprised of binder and impurities cut into the drug.

Curiously, Laing notes that crystal meth, notorious for being synthesized by drug addicts in run-down bedroom labs, is very pure—usually around 90 per cent. However, Laing is quick to point out that this statistic might be misleading. As a specialist frequently called by police to examine clandestine labs, Laing states that meth labs are hellish.

"It's a toxic environment. They're all bad," he said. "They're dirty, disgusting. There's no such thing as a clean lab producing drugs." —JOEL KELLY / joel@vueweekly.com

What have they been smoking at Health Canada?

HEALTH

WELL, WELL, WELL

CONNIE HOWARD
health@vancouverweekly.com

I need to chime in on the drug conversation, at least with respect to the only illegal drug I know anything about.

Recent news of the safety of marijuana relative to alcohol and tobacco is, of course, not really news. Nor is the truth that Health Canada's medical marijuana program has mostly failed those who wish to use marijuana as medicine.

Most of us know that our current government has no intention of resurrecting the Marijuana Reform Bill, which intended not to legalize possession but to decriminalize it and replace jail sentences for possession of small amounts with fines.

What might be news to many, however, is that marijuana was prescribed freely by Canadian physicians until full prohibition in 1932 (recreational use has been prohibited since 1923) and by traditional healers for thousands of years. Many experts say evidence of its therapeutic value is indisputable and users say it is more effective and has infinitely fewer negative effects than codeine as a pain reliever.

But the barriers one must overcome in pursuit of a licence for medical marijuana are high, high enough to be out of reach for many. Though the first one—a physician's signature—is technically not impossible for the seriously ill (those with multiple sclerosis, spinal cord injury, spinal cord disease, cancer, AIDS/HIV, severe arthritis and epilepsy), doctors don't sign readily.

And for those in the category that includes all other illness, getting a licence is a pipe dream—they need a declaration from a specialist who deems conventional pharmaceutical treatments for their problem are ineffective or medically inappropriate.

THOSE WHO FIND THAT marijuana alleviates their symptoms of depression or attention deficit or insomnia or fibromyalgia or panic might just as well not trouble themselves with the application process—we do, after all, have real medicines to deal with those things, things like Zoloft and Prozac and Valium and Ativan and Flurazepam and Ritalin and Adderall. All of which come with extensive tiny-print fast-talking risk warnings, of course, and all of which are making those in the pharmaceutical business very wealthy, but no matter.

The next hoop, for those few who do make it through the first one, is supply. Health Canada's authorized dealer,

Prairie Plant Systems (PPS), provides only one strain of cannabis—a product those in the know say is inferior in every way. (It has been irradiated, is not grown organically, and isn't potent enough for medical use.)

Health Canada has stated in court that compassion clubs have historically provided a safe source to those with medical need. But on the licence application there is no option to choose compassion clubs as a supply source. Applicants after a high quality legal product are out of luck. Hoops for those in need, loopholes for those in power.

Non-profit compassion clubs serve thousands, though, providing access to a variety of strains of clean, high quality cannabis. And in exchange for their compassion for the chronically ill, they continue to risk arrest and criminal prosecution.

Official favouring of pharmaceutical TCH over natural health care practitioners who have experience with herbal medicine (which cannabis is) is no surprise. But, aside from the risks of smoke inhalation, which can be avoided with a vaporizer, the herb has definite advantages over the pharmaceutical version. Users of the synthetic form report more side effects, and absorption is slower and inconsistent. Inhalation of the herb is fast and provides flexible and exact dose control. It's just that the herbal form isn't patentable.

MY OWN GENERATION IS definitely more wary of non-sanctioned medication than younger adults are—eyebrows tend to go up at the mention of marijuana. But these same adults, confident that our solidly trustworthy governments have our best interests in mind, think nothing of throwing ever-growing handfuls of sanctioned drugs into their poor unsuspecting bodies day after day, year after year, never stopping to ask how they'll ever get off the treadmill of managing symptoms and side-effects.

It's fine to care about the laws of the land, awkward and regressive as they sometimes are, but our laws—from the drugs they sanction and the resulting superbugs and side effects, to industry and farming and fast-food and neighbourhood lawn-care practices—are killing us.

Philosopher Ivan Illich claims for himself "the liberty to refuse any and all medical treatment at any time ... the liberty to take any drug or treatment of my own choosing; the liberty to be treated by the person of my choice ... whether that person be an acupuncturist, a homeopathic physician, [or] a neurosurgeon."

It sounds reasonable to me. ▽

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Forget the war on drugs—it's really all about the money

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OPINION ECONOMICS

ers were instructed to give free samples of heroin with the cocaine, and sure enough, the use of heroin exploded. A market created from scratch because of a business experiment.

An even deeper franchising of the drug



trade has taken place in Afghanistan. In the land responsible for 92 per cent of the world's poppy crops, production and export of poppies (almost exclusively going towards opium production) now accounts for over 30 per cent of GDP. Elimination of this trade would stop the only solvent, growing option for many of the rural poor and (unless accompanied by decades of economic growth) would have disastrous effects for the country as a whole. A similar argument can be made for hashish farmers in northern Morocco. Not only is cannabis farming the main source of income in the area, but hashish smoking occupies a traditional role in local culture, and many in the region feel it should be tolerated. These poor rural farmers are making the simple choice to grow the crop that consistently gets them the most money.

HEREIN LIES THE BASIC problem with the way the War on Drugs is conducted. The front line of the war is in the developing world, where police carrying a machete and a can of kerosene hunt down crops in order to burn them. All this does is harm

the farmer and perhaps cause a temporary spike in the street price of drugs; nothing is done to dismantle the distribution chain. This groundwork, along with the patrolling of seaways to intercept drug carrying vessels, makes up the mighty two-pronged approach of the War on Drugs. By best estimates, the US (the catalyst of the global War on Drugs) spends over \$12 billion annually to combat the drug trade. This is money spent

Europe into the rest of the world. The anti-drug community, hard wired to prevent drug flows into these countries, is proving completely incapable of stopping the flow of drugs out.

There are thought to be four different ways to distribute drugs. The way most countries choose, letting criminals do it, is probably the worst, both socially and economically. The three others are allowing drugs to be sold in a licensed café or bar; making drugs available in pharmacies, like over the counter cold medications; or, finally, making drugs available only with a prescription. Pragmatically a government should utilize all three, depending on the drug. Let "soft drugs" such as marijuana be sold in licensed cafés, allow "recreational chemicals" like ecstasy to be sold over the counter and make highly addictive substances such as heroin available only with a prescription.

Such action is perhaps the only way for a government to draw money from the drug trade in order to offset its ill effects. The best way of getting rid of criminals and their nefarious tactics is to take away their business. Like cigarettes and alcohol, demand for drugs does not drop much with excessive taxation. Instead of being a drain on government coffers, drugs could provide a huge inflow. This would be more than enough to pay for any rehabilitation costs, with plenty left over to increase social spending or to decrease taxes. Not to mention all the other positive effects of being able to regulate an industry with such a large potential downside. ▽

only policing the drug industry; when other costs, such as health care, incarceration and rehabilitation are added into the equation, the total can reach over \$60 billion dollars a year in the US alone.

The rapid growth of synthetic drugs, such as ecstasy, is threatening to even further render the War on Drugs obsolete. Synthetic drugs can be made anywhere, and very cheaply. And inversely, distribution chains of synthetic drugs usually flow from North America and

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Prohibition and organized crime go hand in hand

COMMENT | DYER STRAIGHT

GWYNNE DYER
gwynne@vueweekly.com

Barry Cooper's new DVD, *Never Get Busted Again*, which went on sale over the internet late last year, will probably not sell very well outside the United States, because in most other countries the possession of marijuana for personal use is treated as a misdemeanour or simply ignored by the police. But it will sell very well in the US, where many thousands of casual marijuana users are hit with savage jail terms every year in a nationwide game of Russian roulette in which most people indulge their habit unharmed while a few unfortunates have their lives ruined.

Cooper is a former Texas policeman who made over 800 drug arrests as an anti-narcotics officer, but he has now repented.

"When I was raiding homes and destroying families, my conscience was telling me it was wrong, but my need for power, fame and peer acceptance overshadowed my good conscience."

Of course, Cooper's DVD, which teaches people how to avoid arrest for marijuana possession, will also bring him fame, plus a lot of money, but at least it won't hurt people.

However, Cooper lacks the courage of his own convictions. He argues that the so-called War on Drugs is futile and counter-productive so far as marijuana is concerned, but nervously insists that he is offering no tips that would help dealers of cocaine or methamphetamines to escape "justice." It's as if reformers fighting against America's alcohol prohibition laws in the 1920s had advocated re-legalizing beer but wanted to continue locking up drinkers of wine or spirits. But there are bolder policemen around who are willing to say flatly and publicly that all drug prohibition is wrong.

One is Jack Cole, who spent 26 years with the New Jersey police and whose organization, Law Enforcement Against Prohibition (LEAP), is supported by growing numbers of serving policemen who have lost faith in the War on Drugs and want to make peace.

"LEAP wants to end drug prohibition just as we ended alcohol prohibition in 1933," says Cole, who argues that neither kind of prohibition has ever had any success in curbing consumption of the banned substances, but that each has fuelled the growth of a vast criminal empire.

IT IS POLICE WHO TAKE the lead in these issues because they are the ones who must deal with the calamitous consequences of the War on Drugs. No doubt the use of "recreational" drugs does a lot of harm, as does the use of alcohol or tobacco, but that harm is dwarfed by the amount of crime and human devastation caused by 40 years of "war" on drug-users.

Howard Roberts, the deputy chief constable of the

Nottinghamshire police, was the latest senior law enforcement official to make the case for ending the war, pointing out last November that heroin addicts in Britain each commit, on average, 432 robberies, assaults and burglaries a year to raise the money for their illegal habit. Each addict steals about \$90 000 of property a year, whereas the cost of providing them with heroin on prescription from the National Health Service in closely supervised treatment programs would be only \$24 000 a year.

So the NHS should provide heroin to addicts on prescription, said Roberts, like it used to in the 1950s and 1960s, before Britain was pressured into adopting the war-on-drugs model by the US. (Since then, the number of heroin addicts in Britain has risen several hundredfold.) Days later, it emerged that the NHS is actually experimenting with a return to that policy at three places in Britain—and Switzerland has actually been prescribing heroin to addicts on a nationwide basis for some years now, with very encouraging results: crime rate down, addict death rate sharply down.

If every country adopted such a policy—legalizing all drugs and making the so-called "hard" ones available to addicts free, but only on prescription—the result would not just be improved health for drug-users and a lower rate of petty crime but the collapse of the criminal empires that have been built on the international trade in illegal drugs, which is now estimated to be worth \$500 billion a year. That is exactly what happened to the criminal empires that were founded on bootlegging when alcohol prohibition was ended in the United States in 1933.

But what about the innocent children who will be exposed to these drugs if they become freely available throughout the society? Nothing that doesn't happen to them now. There is no city and few rural areas in the developed world where you cannot buy any illegal drug known to man within half an hour, for an amount of money that can be raised by any enterprising 14-year-old.

Indeed, the supply of really nasty drugs would probably diminish if prohibition ended, because they are mainly a response to the level of risk the dealers must face. (Economist Milton Friedman called it the Iron Law of Prohibition: the harder the police crack down on a substance, the more concentrated that substance becomes—so cocaine gives way to crack cocaine, as beer gave way to moonshine under alcohol prohibition.)

This is probably yet another false dawn, for even the politicians who know what needs to be done are too afraid of the gutter media to act on their convictions. But sometime in the next 50 years, after only a few more tens of millions of needless deaths, drug prohibition will end. ▀

Gwynne Dyer is a London-based independent journalist whose articles are published in 45 countries. His column appears regularly in Vue Weekly.

Issues is a forum for individuals and organizations to comment on current events and broader issues of importance to the community. Their commentary is not necessarily the opinion of the organizations they represent or of Vue Weekly.

Housing crisis about more than just homelessness

BOB HAWKESWORTH / euma.ca

HARVEY VOOGD / ehf.ca

These are exciting times for those of us across Alberta concerned about homelessness and the lack of affordable housing.

The City of Edmonton's Cornerstones initiative is a year old and already showing results. The Federal Government recently unveiled its new Homelessness Partnering Strategy.

For the first time in over a decade the Government of Alberta has a cabinet minister responsible for housing. And Premier Stelmach's Alberta Affordable Housing Task Force is currently seeking Albertans' input on this issue.

But our excitement is tempered by the fact that today the vacancy rate in Edmonton is 1.2 per cent.

We also know that 25 per cent of employed Albertans earned less than \$12 per hour in 2005. Half of those workers were over 25 years old and two-thirds were women.

That's a lot of people who run a high risk of being unable to compete in the private housing market.

When Albertans are asked why homelessness is an issue that matters so much, the answer is basically the same. The reality that people are without shelter offends our deeply held belief that community is a place where everyone can belong, can contribute and can participate.

If a person can die of exposure in our city, it may tell us something about that person. But more importantly, that we would allow such a thing to happen says more about all of us collectively than it says anything about the individual person who died.

At a personal level, homelessness offends our deepest held values and beliefs. Housing is a defining condition for creating a strong community. It is a building block for community.

Community is how and where we first secure the basics of survival, including shelter. And then community is how we achieve a good quality of life for ourselves and for our families. When housing fails, community fails at a fundamental level.

We understand that if we want to reduce child poverty, parents need affordable, stable housing. We understand that if people of all skill levels are to participate in the work force, they need affordable housing. We understand that for families to function well, they need affordable housing. We understand that for the long-term sustainability of our communities, we need to assure an adequate supply of affordable housing to households of all income ranges, not just some.

SO WHAT DOES ALL this mean? What are the consequences of starting from the premise of community building in defining housing policy?

It suggests we must see housing as a

key component of the fundamental infrastructure in our cities, much as water, sewer, roads, public transit, libraries, parks and recreation facilities are.

We must eliminate the barriers and bottlenecks in the housing system that prevent permanent, safe and secure affordable housing. By and large that means building an ever-increasing supply of units to match the increasing need.

We need to recognize how affordable housing is a determinant of health and a means to achieve healthier communities.

We need to make the case that affordable housing is a fundamental building block for economic development.

A mix of housing for all income groups ensures an ability to retain the variety of jobs every community needs, including service industry, teachers and essential services providers. We must not allow affordable housing to be marginalized as a program simply to warehouse the vulnerable, but be seen as necessary to achieve desired municipal and provincial outcomes.

Let's reframe the housing issue. As long as it is a homeless crisis, it allows

We must not allow affordable housing to be marginalized as a program simply to warehouse the vulnerable, but be seen as necessary to achieve desired municipal and provincial outcomes.

us to marginalize the people experiencing it. We can label and dismiss them as being completely responsible for their own fate. When we understand this as a social and community crisis, it suggests that it is everyone's problem. Understanding it as a crisis of community implies we are all required to work together on solutions.

It is a reflection of the importance of partnerships. All of us—the various orders of government, the not-for-profit community, the private sector and individuals—must continue to work together.

We need to work hard. We need to work smart. But overwhelmingly, we need to work together to find and implement affordable housing solutions so that Alberta communities remain places where all residents can belong, contribute and participate. ▽

Bob Hawkesworth is the President of the Alberta Urban Municipalities Association and a City of Calgary Alderman. Harvey Voogd is Chair of the Edmonton Housing Trust Fund.

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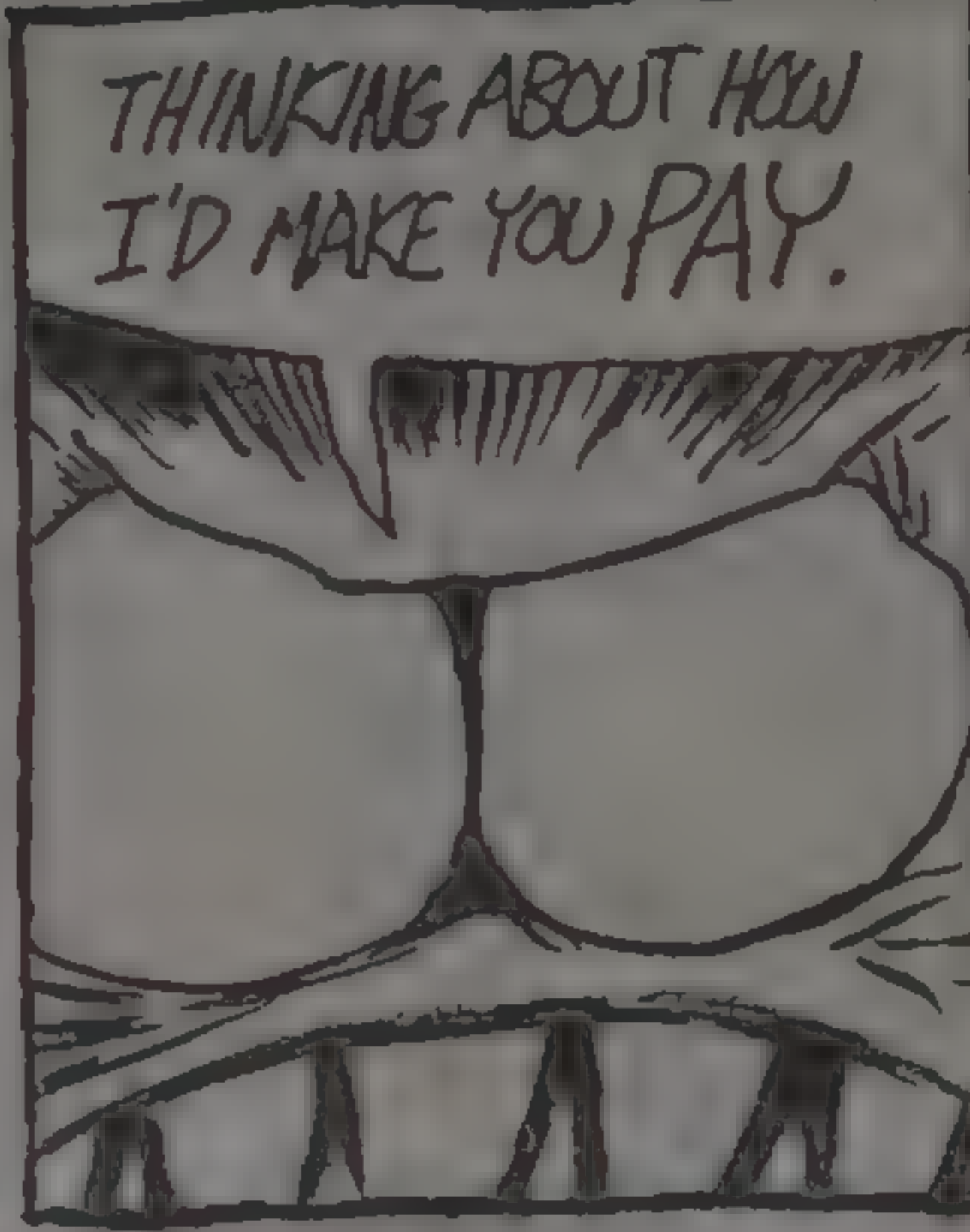
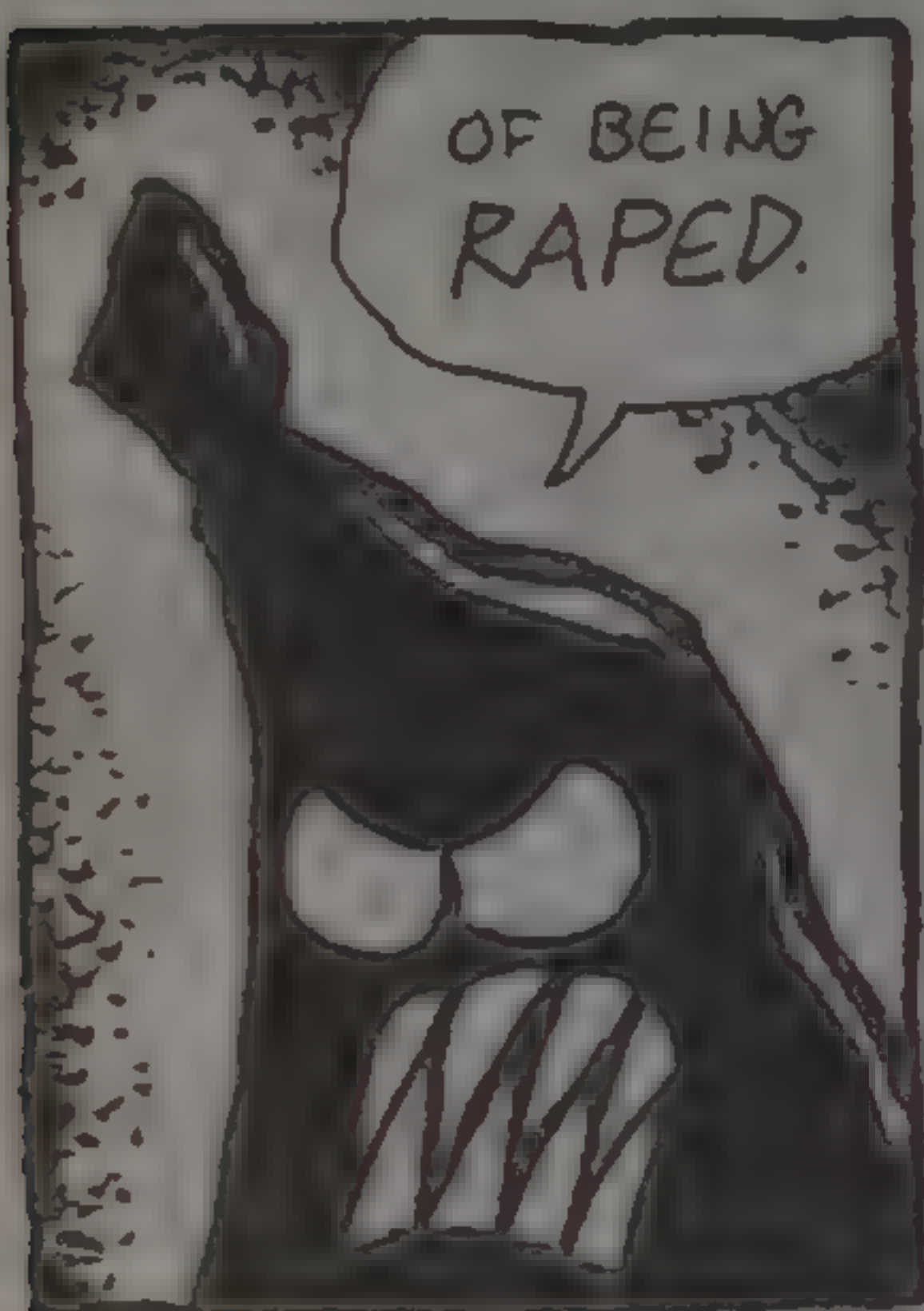
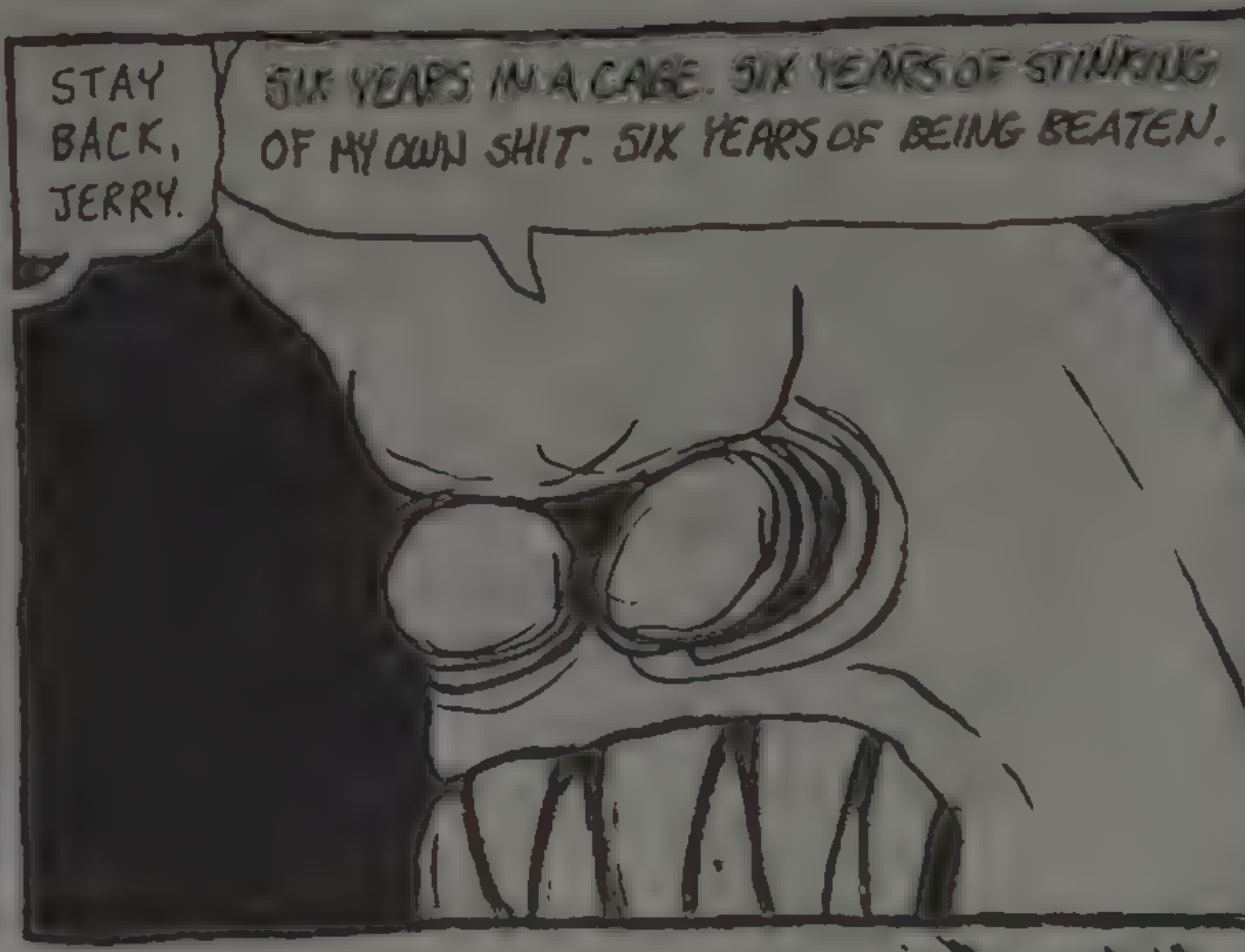
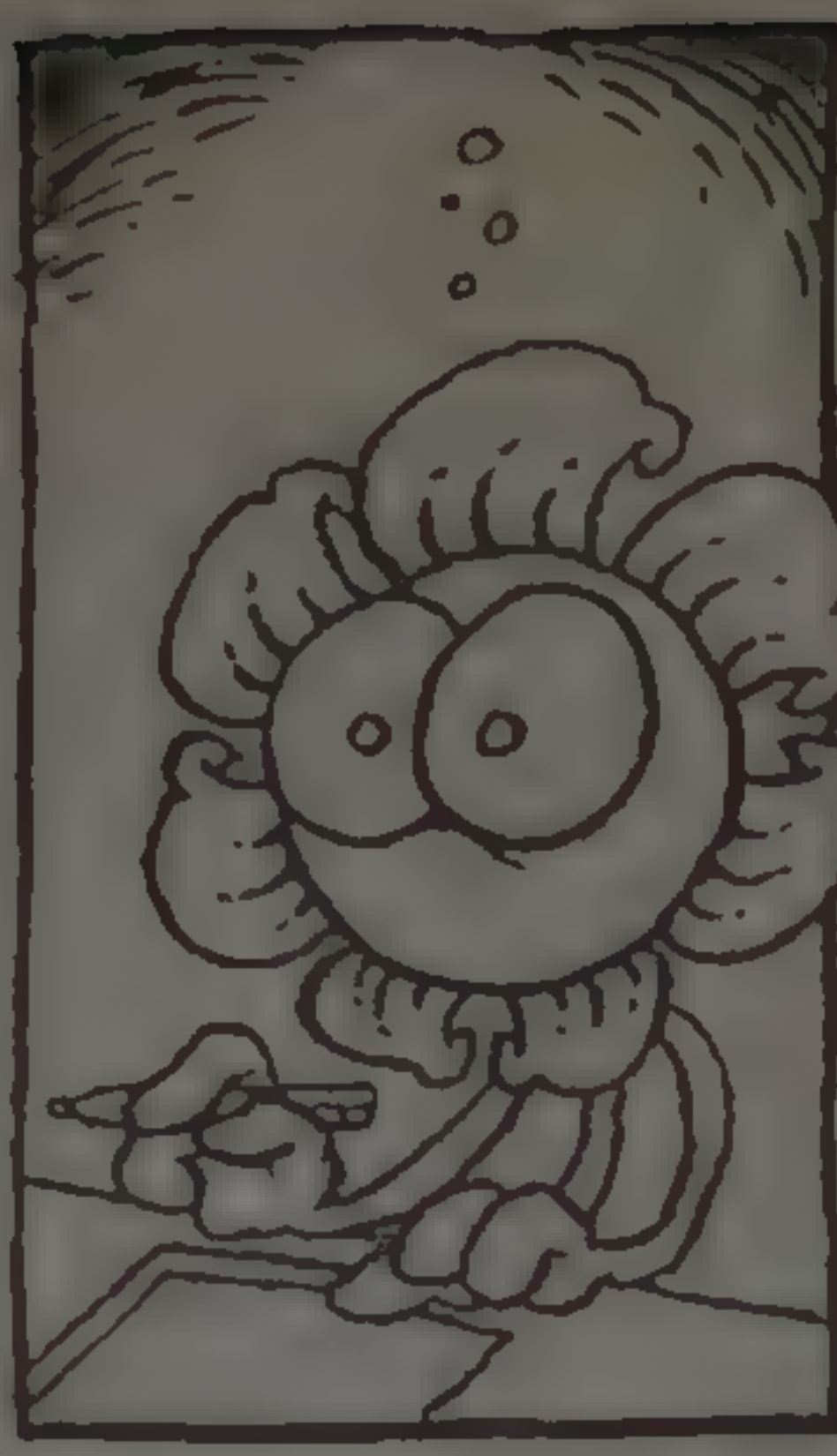
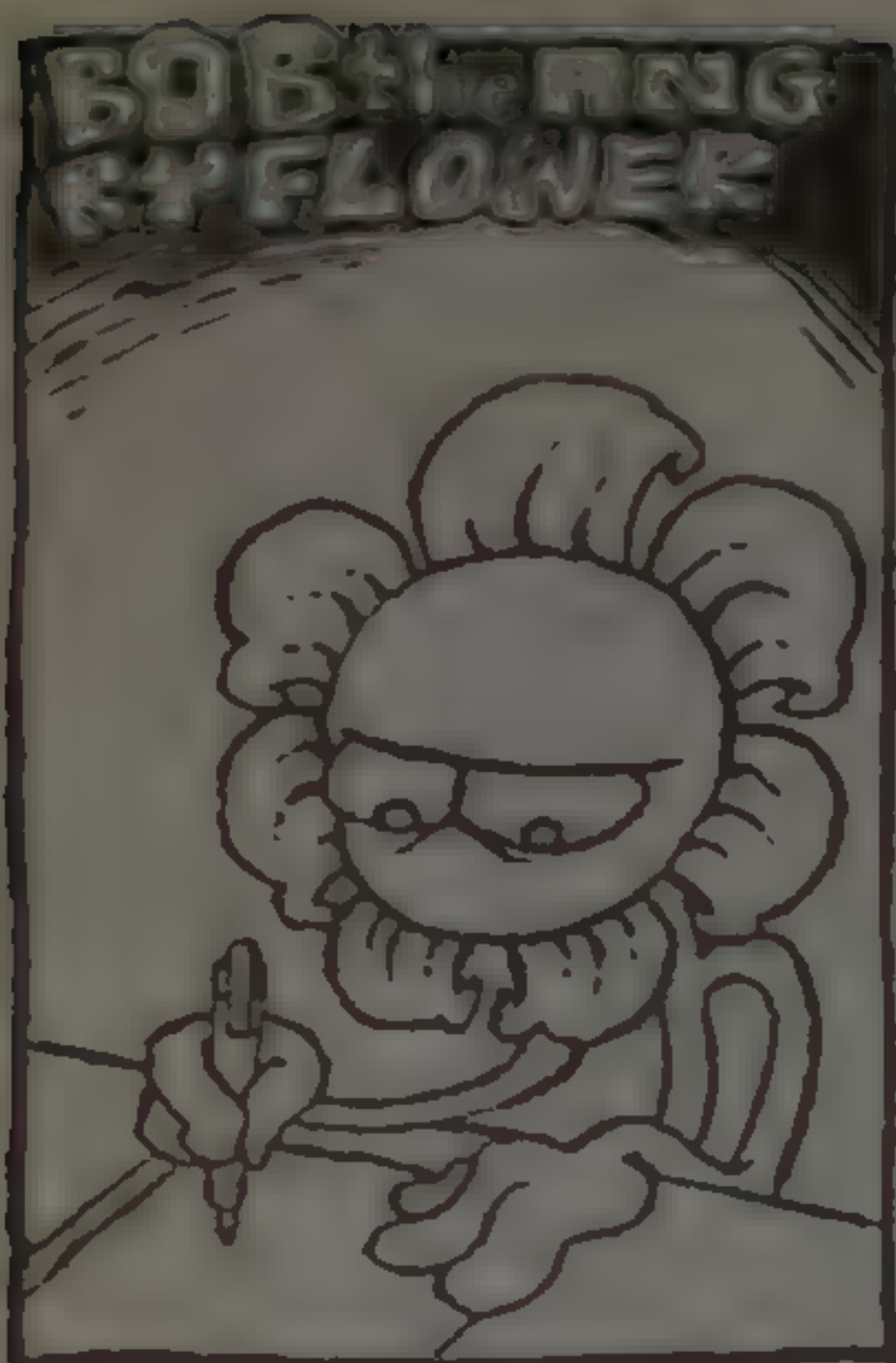
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How the West will be won

HOCKEY **IN THE BOX**
DAVE YOUNG AND TB PLAYER
inthebox@vancouverweekly.com

Here's a quick and relatively painless Oiler recap since last week. A 5-2 loss to St Louis. A 2-1 loss to Chicago. A 3-0 loss to Minnesota. There are two games left in this mostly forgettable season. The draft lottery is on Apr 10. The regular season is over on Apr 9 and playoffs start shortly after that—sans le Oil. TB and Dave take on the Western Conference teams who will be in the Cup tournament this season. We know who is in—barring a miracle from Colorado, who are still mathematically capable of knocking the (ick) Flames out. Here's a rundown.

ALL OR NOTHING—WINGS The Detroit Red Wings are about to enter another playoffs as leaders in the standings but with crappy recent playoff history on their side. Since the 1996-97 season the team has either won the Stanley Cup or been bounced in round one or two by much weaker teams. Like Tiger Woods, they start slowly in tournaments. Unlike Tiger Woods who can continue golfing after slow early rounds, the Wings are out. Then they can golf. Interestingly, the last three playoff years saw the team ejected by Anaheim, Calgary and Edmonton. All three teams went on to the Stanley Cup Final—only to lose. This year they don't have Stevie Y or Brendan S. DY

ALL THEY'RE QUACKED UP TO BE—DUCKS? The Ducks in Anaheim have an interesting combination of youth, size, energy and some savvy veterans having career years in Scott Niedermayer and Teemu Selanne. They also have only three Euros (Selanne, Sammy Pahlsson and Ilya Bryzgalov) regularly playing on their roster. If the stereotype about Europeans disappearing in the playoffs (uh... Detroit's Henrik Zetterberg) is true, it shouldn't hurt this team. But since I'd prefer that Chris Pronger's most successful playoff year in his career be last year with the team he shunned I can't support this team. DY

HEATING UP—CANUCKS After picking up Luongo in the off-season, the Canucks were a pretty good team. Since GM Nonis made his deadline deals, they've been a great team. Mind you, so have San Jose and Dallas, and Vancouver will likely be playing one of them. It ain't getting any easier. TB

COOLING OFF—PREDATORS Nashville's been so-so lately, but I wouldn't put too much weight into that. You know that any team that brags Forsberg, Arnott and Legwand down the middle has depth. That, plus two decent goalies, a brick shithouse named Jordan Tootoo, a fast style of play and the coolest third jerseys in the league make them a fun team to watch. TB

HUNGRY—SHARKS After losing to the Oil last Spring, you know that this team is showing up to play this year. They have the scoring, the defence and the goaltending to go far. Adding Guerin strengthened an already tough forward corps, and they've gotten 17 out of a possible 20 points down the stretch. They won't make the same mistakes they made last year, and I expect them to go far. TB

I STILL HATE THE—STARS Somehow this team refuses to get old and go away. They've also been playing well down the stretch, but I don't see them going far this year. The West is just too tough. And I'm still full of hate. TB

BY NAME ONLY—WILD Jacques Lemaire has managed to bore his way into the playoffs and is looking to this idiot writer to be this year's Edmonton or Calgary, upsetting their way to the Finals. Although they could still finish anywhere from eighth place to third place, they will be seen as underdogs. They have great goaltending in Manny Fernandez and Nicklas Backstrom, a killer defensive system and Marian Gaborik. DY

FLAME OFF I know the Cup should find its way back to Canada, but not at any cost I'll cheer for Vancouver or Ottawa. The Flames do have great goaltending and the energy of Jarome Iginla. Big whoop. It's called a rivalry. DY

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Play your way into social Oblivion

GAMES INFINITE LIVES

DARREN ZENKO
infinite.lives@vuwweekly.com

The tale of the adventure of the journey through the realms of extra-dimensional madness begins, as all these tales begin, in a moodily-lit prison cell furnished with only a low stool, some fetters and a skeleton. The lifer across the hall hisses the taunts he always hisses through the bars, and, presently, the doomed Emperor and his bodyguard arrive to make their usual secret-door passage through the dank chamber en route to an inevitable assassination. The cell's occupant is freed, charged with a terrible trust, and sent off into a world of magic, mystery and drug-addicted cat people.

Another day, another character launched into *Oblivion*. This time around, it's a sneaky little Dark Elf swamp witch who's had the sacred Amulet of Kings pressed into her manacled hands by the Patrick Stewart-voiced sovereign. Tasked to find his blood heir, deliver the Amulet and "close shut the jaws of Oblivion"—the demonic realm threatening to overrun the world of life and love—our heroine will do as every heroine before her has done: dick around endlessly on other, more interesting quests. Maybe buy a mansion and a pony.

But first, the aforementioned journey into the domain of Sheogorath, Lord of Madness! These lands are known as the Shivering Isles, and they've just been loaded, at great expense in time and cash money, onto my Xbox's hard drive. I'd been a long time away from *Oblivion*, beloved time-devouring masterpiece of electronic swrds n' sorcery, and the release of this new expansion—with its promise of "30 hours of additional gameplay!"—had long been a red-letter date on my mental calendar. Fantastic frolics in a twisted land of insanity! New weapons, armor and enemies! Terrain and architecture that's not wholly Western European! You can imagine my excitement.

Fact forgotten in the fever: I have a full-time job, now. Last time I'd done much diving into the 'Bliv, I was a "full-time" (*hyuk*) freelancer with a side gig power-washing the seats of an outdoor theatre; taking eight hours out of an inclement Tuesday to fireball goblins was no big thing. Now, between the oatmeal-grey requirements of my cubicle, the necessities of house- and life-keeping and the responsibil-

ities of love, I can maybe slip an hour or two in edgewise, here and there. Back when playing videogames was the closest thing I had to a full-time job, nine-to-fivers used to kind of sniff and say, "Must be nice." I took it as jealousy; I should have taken it as a command, answered "Yes! It *must* be!" and took it to that "next level" I keep hearing about.

THAT'S NOT WHAT HAPPENED, though, and as much as I may mourn the passing of a time where I could (usually) pay the rent and eat (poorly) while spending 20-plus hours a week with a controller in my hand I can't, as the hay-farmers say, wish for a different field. For now, I'm on the other side of the must-be-nice equation, and my dark-elven vixen (Pilsné, a name of great evocative power) will have to be content with incremental progress over the months, exploring the Shivering Isles in hour-long sorties while I read in my cubicle excited emails from my colleague still living *The Life* about mighty deeds, twisted ruins, Golden Saints, obliterated villages and magic mud puddles.

I wonder, though: how do the *WoW*ers manage it? If I can barely gather the moments for an hour or two of solo *Oblivion*, how do *World of Warcraft*'s millions of multi-players manage to find the time for the days of grind *that* fantasy game requires and still keep a roof over their computers. It's not all students, kids and shut-ins on assistance—my own office is filled with guys who work longer hours than I do and still they're coffee-talking about their Level 60 whatever, their electronic indicators of hundreds of hours of devoted service in the cause of online good/evil. Is there a secret to being a job-having power gamer?

It's easy to see now where the standard dismissive "no social life" and "no sex life" jibes come from—these are certainly the most obvious means by which a dedicated digital fantasist might make room for the hobby. Are there other less pathetic ways? My girl insists regular yoga practice has the effect of adding hours to one's day; could I perhaps harness the dharmic power of the *asanas* to squeeze more *Oblivion* into my life?

More on that in a future column. Until then, here's my review of Shivering Isles expansion: [SPOILER WARNING]

There's a crazy guy named Shelden who wears this purple plate mail I totally want to steal. [END SPOILERS] ♡

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Colin Wiseman

I've seen Sunshine, and I've seen rain

COLIN CATHREA / colin@vancouverweekly.com

The faces of the people standing on the side of the road told the tale. As rain poured down from the heavens, I'm sure a good number of them were wondering what the hell they were doing up there. It was late March and the temperature had climbed to 17 degrees in Banff.

However, **Sunshine Village** is at significant elevation, so what would the next two days hold? It's always a bit of a crap shoot when the temperatures hover around freezing, but I held out hope knowing that the beautiful Sunshine Inn had a snow base of a gazillion feet. Still, I should have brought some extra waterproof gear.

I drove past the cars parked well up the road where the numerous shuttle buses were picking up the soggy patrons waiting for a lift to the tram. This is only one of the fringe benefits of staying up at the mountain. You drive right up to the gondola base building and check in, while a fine young lad valet parks your automobile and another sets you up with lift tickets.

I'd left Edmonton a little late that morning, so the parking lot was at full capacity and the cars were parked for kilometres up the road. But Sunshine continually adds more and more shuttle buses to their fleet to ensure wait times are very short. I also really like the new uploading area for the gondola. It's wide open and those horrible

RIDE | SUNSHINE

metal stairs are gone since they moved the tram down closer to the parking lot.

Since I'd driven up this morning and hadn't changed into my ski clothes, I took my overnight bag on the tram and it was up, up and away. Halfway up, the rain started to look sleety and I spied some maniacs coming down Silver City, one of Sunshine's new extreme zones below Goats Eye Mountain. I wanted the gondola to stop so I could see what line these guys were going to pick. Every descent looked terrifying. But we continued on up in our swinging cabin.

"It's starting to look promising" one of the two snowboarders yelled over his cranked up iPod. "Yea, but the park's gonna suck" his equally tuned-out buddy replied. I soon spotted people blasting down the lower section of Goats Eye, where I have never seen full snow coverage in 20 years. There was at least 20 or 30 centimetres of freshies and more coming down. The rain had turned to glorious snow and it was soaked in. Way in.

THE WALK FROM the tram to the hotel went quick, and before I knew it I was in my ski clothes and out on the hill. Soon I was heading up the Angel quad. The wind had picked up and by

the top, I was shielding my face from the corn snow pellets abrasively stripping off my outer layer of derma. The wind at the top must have been 50 or 60 kilometres per hour.

Figuring that the more protected Mt Standish might work better under these conditions, I cruised down under the chair, staying close to the snow fences to get some bearing and depth perception of the terrain as it was impossible to see any bumps, hell, anything under foot or down the hill. The snow was coming down and the clouds were hanging low, smothering the hill. The base area was calm and the snow fell gently, so I headed up Standish.

Once again the wind picked up, but only the last bit towards the top. I have a favourite line down this mountain that I always ski. It's a series of rollers, a couple of cornices and a steep chute towards the bottom. I had a bitch of a time with the rollers due to the light, so I wisely veered off before the cornice, as I probably would have skied off it without even knowing it was there.

One thing I notice about bad light days is how much extra energy you burn. When I can see I can balance over my skis, but when I can't, I struggle back and forth and it seems my legs are always burning. I tense up and tire much quicker. After four hours of fantastic powder skiing I was totally burnt out. I took the elevator

up the daunting two floors and lay on the bed.

I awoke famished, so I headed down to the Chimney Corner restaurant located right in the hotel. The prices here are always a bit of a pleasant surprise. Because you are basically forced to eat here when you stay, and with ski resort prices generally much higher than city prices, I figure they could price meals at double what you'd pay in Edmonton. But they are very similar to city prices, and the food and service is great.

As I sat under the big glass atrium watching the wet snow stick to everything, the large outdoor hot tub looked inviting, but I knew the minute I got out and back to my room it would be lights out, and I wanted a start on this article so I ordered another beer and started poking out this story. I hit the tubby at 8:30 pm and, as predicted, was sawing logs 10 minutes after I got back to the room.

SUNDAY STARTED OUT as always with a hearty breakfast at the Chimney. It was cloudy, but not as overcast as Saturday. One more added benefit of staying on the mountain is first tracks, and since it snowed all night I was bound and determined to be the first one up the lifts.

Unfortunately, my anticipated 8:30 am departure up the Standish chair to take in the knee-deep power was delayed as a result of ice. I was

skiing by 9:15, but the parking lot patrons had arrived, and the lines were long. One thing about high-speed quads is they get so many people up the mountain so quickly that there are no uncut lines after about an hour.

Just after noon, I spied a few people heading over to Delirium Dive. I hiked over, knowing full well I didn't have an avalanche beacon, but I wanted to have a look. A nice young couple from Canmore was deliberating dropping in. Sandra did not seem too keen, and when she opted out I asked if I could borrow her "peeper" for just one run. Her husband now had the perfect excuse for heading in, so off we went. It was one of the most exhilarating runs I've ever had. (Thanks again Sandra and Pete!)

I was surprised the snow was as light as it was. As Sunday flew by, the light improved and the powder disappeared. I left with a really good feeling, knowing I had at least one more trip this season—our annual May long weekend Slush Cup trip is how we've capped off the season for many, many years.

Watching people strip down to nothing and immerse themselves in ice water is a joy I hold very dear to my heart. Last year we managed to golf, ski, whitewater kayak and mountain bike in the four days of May over the Victoria Day long weekend.

God bless you Queen Victoria, and God bless Sunshine Village. ▀

No ifs, ands or Buttes, this hill rocks

ST. VE TRENDALE / stve@vuwweekly.com

I could hear my ski shooter pal Karl Weatherly bearing down behind me, threatening to speed past and punch my line if I didn't hurry the hell out of his way. "Git some, Tren-dale!!" Karl bellowed in his native North Carolina accent. I picked my speed up a notch, diving into 10 centimetres of talcum light powder atop a firm base of creamy corduroy. We were on the slopes at **Crested Butte**, experiencing Colorado skiing straight out of a postcard: high altitude blue skies with snow so dry and light that you'd think the state had patented it.

Whether Weatherly passed me or not was rather a moot point, since on most days Crested Butte offers both plenty of powder (especially if you can arrange a local hookup) and fantastic groomed on piste skiing.

Located in the southwest part of the state, Crested Butte is a mid-sized American resort with a storied yet financially dismal past. In the valley floor lies the former mining town of Crested Butte; three kilometres higher there's the resort town of Mount Crested Butte, where the skiing is. Guests fly into nearby Gunnison, which in pre-global warming days was frequently known as the coldest spot in the lower 48.

Crested Butte garnered huge recognition in the late '80s and early '90s as the birthplace of extreme skiing in the United States. The fearsome pyramid known as the Crested Butte mountain

RIDE | CRESTED BUTTE

dominates the skyline and features dozens of sketchy lines punctuating a series of bony ledges and "chocolate chip" rocks.

Recreational skiers are free to flail down gravity-defying test pieces such as Banana Peel, the Funnel, the North Face and the infamous Headwall. This is billy-goat skiing on a par with Lake Louise or Whistler. Ever-present jagged boulders make Seth Morrison's advice to "always take your rock skis to Crested Butte" more than just an idle comment. A friend of mine slipped on the Banana Peel several years back and broke her wrist, shattered her pelvis and pulverized her face. She was in a Denver hospital for 10 days.

Free skiers, telemarkers and their similarly financially challenged brethren may get great press but they don't sell a lot of lift tickets. Due to its reputation, an intermediate skier from vertically-challenged states such as Texas or Kansas might consider Crested Butte a place you'd stay away from. Which is to say that though hardcore skiers look upon the resort with reverence, it didn't make the Caloway family of Texas (the hill's previous owners) a lot of money.

The resort languished without a purchaser for several years until Vermont's financially-astute Mueller fam-



ily entered the picture. As owners of Okemo Resort in Ludlow, Vermont, the Muellers had successfully turned around a middling family mountain back east and were now ready for some Western adventure.

The first thing the Muellers did from a marketing perspective was to de-emphasize the gnarly stuff and rebrand the resort as "Colorado's Best Corduroy" in order to attract the masses. State of the art grooming machines and snowmaking guns were installed to get the most out of the resort's rather sparse annual snowfall. (CB averages 610 centimetres of snow). Double black diamond extremists might have winced, but

many locals were quickly addicted to the fresh corduroy.

The second, far more costly, endeavour was to redesign Mount Crested Butte's base village, an architectural mash-up of angular, Euro-trash condos with cracked paving stones and fading stucco. (Think Les Arcs crossed with a cheap Mexican time-share.) The Muellers plan to level and rebuild several buildings in the core of Crested Butte village, and add another town centre at the North Village. The striking new Mountaineer Square project features corrugated metal cladding that reprises the region's mining heritage.

Aside from the truly challenging

skiing, the best reason to visit Crested Butte is simply to bro-down with some of the friendliest and most iconoclastic mountain folk you'll ever meet. They take kindly to you once they find out you're from Canada and not from Texas, and will even apologize for George Bush. Much of the town features nationally-preserved historic buildings that thankfully have not all been converted into real estate offices. Grab your morning java at Camp Four, take in the Museum of Mountain Biking on Elk Street after the lifts close, then helicopter dance to a local jam-band until the wee hours at the Calypso at night.

"Git some," indeed. ▽



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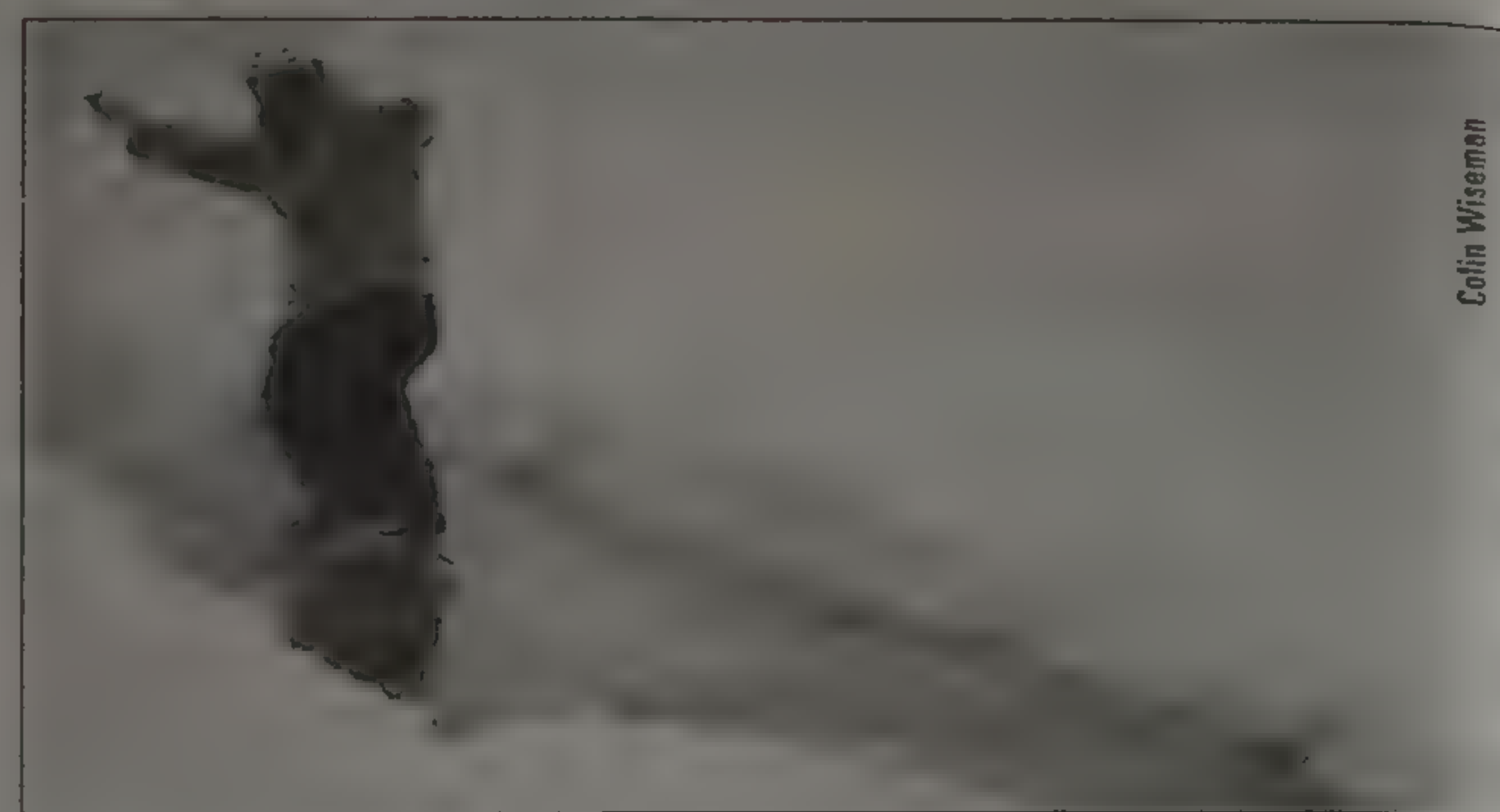
COLIN CATHREA / colin@vueweekly.com

Spring may be the best-kept secret of skiing and snowboarding. Just when many people grow weary of winter and opt for warmer pastimes, the mountain air warms and the snow softens. The days grow longer and brighter—and ski resort prices go down.

When the weather alternates between freezing and thawing temperatures, snow keeps changing from slush to ice. When I go spring skiing, I don't like to get to the hill for first run. I like to wait for that perfect time of the day when the snow softens and groomed skating rinks become beautiful carpets of carving heaven. No need to get out of bed for first tracks—unless it's snowed overnight.

The "slush line" moves up the mountain as the day wears on. By afternoon, the best skiing is found at higher elevations. The first slopes to get sun (those facing east or south) offer the best in corn conditions. These aspects will get early sun and the most predictably good corn. As the day progresses, south- to west-facing slopes begin to get sun and may have great skiing if warm air has not warmed up the entire snowpack.

As the day progresses, the snow becomes heavier. You will naturally become more fatigued, and mistakes like sitting back and twisting your upper body will creep into your skiing. This is the most likely time for injuries. Heavy snow, tired muscles, and forced turns can result in slow twisting falls that can hurt you. Pace yourself. Heavy snow often requires more strength and consequently tires you more quickly. When I'm going up for several days, I don't always get to the hill all that early. Tired skiers and heavy, wet snow make for slow, twisting falls that injure tendons, ligaments and bones—and slowing down will not keep you out of harm's way. The best snow is usually



Colin Wiseman

found between 11 am and 2 pm, especially if you know where to look.

My recommendation, when this time of day rolls around, is to ski your butt off. Stop for food later.

Now, don't get me wrong here. I love to blow apart soft, slushy bumps and carve 15-cm divots into the hills as much as the next guy. But it's when you let your guard down as you're just putzing along that an unexpected bog of snow can toss you. Be aware you are tiring and quit while the quitting's good.

THERE ARE SEVERAL IDEAS to keep in mind when you head up for a spring ski trip. They fall into two basic categories: equipment and technique. By equipment I mean everything from the top of your head to the base of your skis. Choice of clothing is very important as the temperature on a spring day can swing from downright cold to baking heat.

Obviously layering is important, but the difference from a regular winter day is the base layer. I cringe when I see a half-naked skier bound for a third-degree, skin-ripping fall. I have seen skin removed to the bone from falls on spring snow, and it's far worse in the morning when the refrozen slush from the previous day is waiting with razor-sharp ice crystals ready to rip flesh like a cheese grater. Full sleeves that have a tight wrist are the

best. Man-made fibres are prone to burn from friction in a fall, so wool and cotton work best.

Continuing on skin protection, sunscreens are a given. The higher the SPF the better. I don't want to scare people away, but I have witnessed some terrible burns from only a couple of hours of exposure. Smear up all exposed skin heavily! Wear a hat—scalp burns are painful. UV rays are much more intense as a result of light reflection and elevation. It may not seem like you are getting many rays on a cloudy day, but that's not so.

To help keep your body temperature regulated, zip up going up the chairlift and zip down as you ride down. Have rain gear handy. (Although it doesn't sound appealing, skiing in the rain can be terrific, if you're properly dressed.) Take a light pair of gloves and keep them on. I love the "mechanics gloves" they sell at Home Depot and Canadian Tire. They are great for skiing, biking and all sorts of activities.

Spring poses some interesting challenges for technique. A typical spring day will give you a host of different snow conditions from ice to slush. Early in the day when it's icy, don't lean over in your turns. Keep centred so if your skis slide out from under you, your body will travel down the hill with your skis. If you are "banking" your turns, your skis will blow out from under you.

Slush isn't too difficult to ski in. You do have to force your turns, though, as the snow is sticky and heavy. Slush conditions often mean varying conditions all throughout a ski run. It's best to keep your knees flexed and ready for changes. As the day warms and free water saturates the snow, wet snow creates a suction, which grabs and slows skis. This potentially perilous problem is especially bad in the flats, where sun has been melting snow with more intensity. For maximum glide on wet days, treat yourself to a tuneup. A stone grind and the proper base structure (or surface finish) are as important as the right wax in spring conditions. A base structure ideal for spring has deeper grooves, called rills, that break up the suction between the snow and the base of the ski.

Don't miss out on some of the best turns and the most beautiful and warmest skiing of the year. Hit it hard in the morning and leave the afternoon slush for tomorrow's corn. The mountains call me loud in spring and some of my best skiing memories come from bluebird days in April and May. Go forth ... the fun awaits! ▼

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Local

Rabbit Hill — Closed for the season; Freeride Bike Park opening May 25
Snow Valley — Closed for the season; Snow Valley Golf Classic—May 28

Alberta

Canada Olympic Park — 65cm base, no new snow; last day of the season extended to April 6
Castle Mt. — Closed for the season
Lake Louise — 202-247cm base, 20cm of new snow, all lifts and 139 runs open
Marmot Basin — 175cm base, 24 new snow, all lifts and main runs open
Mt. Norquay — 150cm base, 28cm of new snow; daily operation ends April 9, re-opening for April 13-15
Nakiska — 30-140cm base, 30cm of new snow, 5/6 lifts and 25 runs open; last day of the season is April 8
Sunshine — 212cm base, 18cm of new snow, all lifts and 107 runs open
Tawatinaw — 24 runs open; great spring conditions!

B.C.

Apex (Penticton) — 175cm base, no new snow, 3 lifts and 50 runs open
Big White (Kelowna) — 237cm base, 15 lifts and 115 runs open
Fernie (Kootenay Rockies) — 305cm base, 49cm of new snow, 105 runs open; Closing April 15
Kicking Horse (Golden) — 253cm base, 14cm of new snow, 106 runs open (subject to avalanche control)
Kimberley (Kootenay Rockies) — 155cm base, 26cm of new snow, 70 runs open; Spring Splash April 7 & 8
Mt. Washington (Vancouver Island) — 345cm base, no new snow, 50 runs open; Closing April 15
Panorama (Invermere) — 179cm base, 32cm of new snow, 117 runs open; Closing April 15
Powder King (Pine Pass—northern BC) — 425cm base, no new snow
Powder Springs (Revelstoke) — Closed for snow sports
Red Mt. (Rossland) — Closed for the season
Silver Star (Vernon) — 208cm base, 4cm of new snow, 113 runs open; Closing April 9
Sun Peaks (Kamloops) — 177cm base, 13cm of new snow, 121 runs open
Whitewater (Nelson) — 318cm base, no new snow; Closing April 9
Whistler/Blackcomb — 319cm base, 10cm of new snow, 82 groomed runs open, 42ft of snow (and counting) since Nov. 1!

U.S.A.

Big Mt. (Whitefish, MT) — 214cm base, 26cm of new snow, 82 runs open; Closing April 8
Big Sky (Montana) — 152-230cm base, 50cm of new snow, 3800 acres of open terrain on 150 trails
49 North (Chewelah Peak, WA) — 93-275cm base, 10cm of new snow, 68 trails open
Great Divide (Marysville, MT) — 63cm base, no new snow, 60 runs open, tickets just \$20
Lookout Pass (ID-MT border) — 125cm base, 10cm of new snow; Closing April 7
Mt. Spokane (northern WA) — Closed for the season
Schweitzer Mt. (Sandpoint, ID) — 300cm base, 4cm of new snow
Silver Mt. Resort (Kellogg, ID) — 245cm base, 18cm new snow, 56 runs open
Sun Valley (Idaho) — 143cm base, 5cm of new snow, 45 runs open; world's largest computerized snowmaking system (645 acres)

All conditions accurate as of April 4, 2007



Frozen canyons and waterfalls dazzle to create a winter wonderland on Banff icewalks

GORDON DANIEL / gordon@vancouverweekly.com

If you're up for a new experience before the last of the ice and snow turns to mud, get out to Banff for an icewalk. **Icewalking** trips like those offered by Discover Banff Tours will appeal to just about anybody. I was instantly hooked.

"The secret to icewalking is the cleats," our guide revealed as we geared up in the parking lot. It was 9 am and we were preparing to start out on our first tour. We dutifully attached the cleats (provided with all of DBT's icewalk tours) to the soles of our boots. After a few cautious steps to assure myself that the cleats worked as promised, I took off down the icy trail with total conviction.

Our first tour took us up the popular Johnston Canyon. Our small group chatted warmly as we started up the trailhead. The fresh smell of the trees and the sounds of the birds had everyone in good spirits. Before long, everyone was swapping stories, mingling and joking.

The trail follows a series of 20 smaller waterfalls 2.6 kilometres up to the impressive Upper Falls. A succession of steel walkways is bolted to the canyon wall and allows visitors an exceptional yet sturdy position from which to admire the water's well worn path.

Sections of the trail feature frozen masses of intricately patterned ice. Ground water freezes as it seeps out of the canyon walls and these highly crafted works of art are tinted a glacial blue like walls of sapphire. In fact, it was the same color as my favourite bottle of gin.

Along the way, our guide disclosed a

BANFF ICEWALKING

wealth of information on a wide range of subjects from how the canyon was formed to how stocked fish have affected the local species in the creek. We discovered that our trail wound through rocks that were once an ancient sea floor. Fossils of prehistoric coral can be observed right on the trail.

The limestone and dolomite walls of the canyon have been carved out over many millennia. The action of the water creates a string of falls and pools that freeze over and form prime routes for ice climbers. Earlier in the year we'd have certainly seen ice climbers scaling these frozen falls.

The afternoon tour was a 4.2-km round trip up the mystical Grotto Canyon. This time we actually hiked up a frozen bed of ice the entire way. We passed walls of rock dotted with bolts and anchors used by rock climbers to scale the many routes in warmer months.

AT THE TOP of the canyon were several more frozen crags of ice hanging proud and radiant in the sun. The highlight of the afternoon for me was witnessing the 1 500-year-old Native rock paintings on the canyon wall. Our guide was able to unravel for us some of the mysteries behind these unique and ancient works of art. The hot chocolate and cookies were a nice touch, too.

Adventurous go-getters should be able to find these trails on their own but a few advantages to the guided tour must not be overlooked. First and

foremost, the guides are exceptional. Rarely have I experienced such enthusiasm and genuine passion for sharing their vast local knowledge. It was refreshing to acquire some facts and anecdotes about the world we typically ski right by, racing to catch the next chairlift. Not to mention that, without the guides, I would have walked by obliviously to both the fossils and the rock paintings.

Discover Banff Tours prides itself on providing small, personalized tours and ours was no exception. The tours are well organized and include pickup and delivery to your hotel in Banff or Canmore. The cost for each icewalk tour is \$59. Kids pricing is also available, and this is an ideal activity for families. Tours are fun and interactive and great learning opportunities as well. Check out their web site (banff-tours.com) and you will find an explorer's treasure of tours and activities. DBT offers many other programs—from snowshoeing and dog sledding to winter survival. Combine any two and they'll buy you lunch at the Old Spaghetti Factory!

As all outdoor enthusiasts know, there's a liberating freedom in escaping the city's madness and heading out to enjoy quality time in the great outdoors. It cools our fired up nerves, calms the soul and invigorates the spirit. The value of these outings should never be underestimated. Whether you're a visiting tourist or an Albertan local taking family or friends out to experience the Rockies, Discover Banff Tours has something for you. Place your trust in their professional, friendly service and enthusiastic guides—on or off the ice. ▀

Edmonton's own inducted into the Hall

HART GOLBECK / hart@vuweekly.com

On Apr 19 in Gatineau, Québec, Edi Podivinsky will be inducted into the Canadian Ski Hall of Fame. That's quite an accomplishment for someone who made his first tracks at Snow Valley Ski Club right here in Edmonton. Podivinsky was discovered at an early age and developed through the Alberta Ski Team, earning a spot on our national team.

All this happened at a time when a huge void had been created on the National Team because Crazy Canucks like Ken Read, Dave Irwin, Dave Murray and Steve Podborski had retired. Podivinsky was a fearless downhiller and he excelled despite not having any teammates like the previous Canadian group to push him. He was the first Canadian to win a

RIDE | FAME

gold medal at the world alpine junior ski championships and he continued on to capture a bronze at the 1994 Lillehammer Olympics. He also captured six world cup titles on the World Cup circuit.

When he retired in 2002 Podivinsky did not go down quietly. He took this opportunity with the media to berate the executive of the Canadian Alpine team, whom he felt did not treat the athletes as well as they should.

As it turns out, and probably not from his doing, most of that executive has been replaced and the new director Ken Read is in charge of a team that is coming off of their most successful season in history. ▼

Big air everywhere

HART GOLBECK / hart@vuweekly.com

With ski resorts starting to wind down and the air competitions are jumping up all over our mountain resorts. On Sat, Apr 7, the partying begins at Fernie Alpine Resort with Big Air and Kokanee freeride events all encompassed in a huge Snow Jam. There'll be live music featuring Five Star Affair, and since it's a Kokanee event you can expect plenty of cold beer, accompanied by the glacier girls.

On Sun, Apr 8 at Panorama they'll be constructing a monster jump right in front of the village and they are looking for skiers, boarders and bikers to take to the sky. This event is going to have a huge party atmosphere and there are numerous prizes including

WIDE | SPRING

\$2 500 in cash.

On this same weekend at Sun Peaks near Kamloops, they are hosting a Dummy Downhill with a twist. The idea is to creatively attach anything to a pair of skis and then launch it off of a jump. Last year's winner had a mini monster truck replica and they are challenging all comers. Points are awarded for style, design, coolness and destruction upon impact. I'm guessing the truck made a huge impact.

Don't forget to pack your sunscreen when taking in these events because it's getting hot out there. ▼

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I can't believe it's pot butter!

MARTA STUPOR'D / marta@vueweekly.com

When I was in the clink, I had to trade favours. It doesn't matter now what I wanted—but let me tell you, minimum security is still prison. Some of those embezzlement bitches formed tough cliques around the gazebo in the exercise yard.

Since people knew who I was, they came to me with questions. I could usually refer them to the issue of my award-winning magazine in which they could find the techniques I taught. In return, I learned about certain ingredients I didn't employ when I started my catering company in Connecticut. And let me tell you, these additions are a damn good thing.

A suburban housewife hooked me up with some shake so I could make some of my infamous pot butter. The best thing about pot butter is that you can use up all the stems and leaves that you never felt like rolling up. If you have a good relationship with your dealer, you might be able to get the inferior ditch weed at a significant discount.

Now, I'm a smoker who enjoys the head trip. I love getting new ideas for my empire. However, sometimes I want a different trip. Anyone can make tea in a French press or sprinkle hash in a pan of brownies, but properly prepared pot butter will make you curl up on your custom Italian divan and watch that darling Ms Winfrey or *The View* on TiVo for hours. Alternatively, a body stone delivers hours of fluid dancing if you

stay out of the chill out room. Remember to stay hydrated.

THE FIRST STEP to pot butter is to dry the weed, either by spreading it out on a cookie sheet over paper towel for 24 hours or popping it in the oven to warm for a half hour. You're looking to produce dry powder in the eight dollar coffee grinder—or "bud buster"—that you have co-opted for the purpose.

Portioning is a matter of intent. If you're going to snack on a few cookies and watch TV, you'll make a pound of butter with an eighth of good stuff. However, if you're going to

DISH POT-ABLES

feed the girls for a charity ball planning session, a couple of pounds of butter with half an ounce of stems and leaves will do the trick. Plus, the end result freezes well.

In a large, covered, stainless steel pot, boil the product plus an extra two inches of water for an hour. Strain out the weed from the water and its load of soluble waxes, tar and chlorophyll which burn you out. The psychoactive THC doesn't come out in the water. This stage isn't as necessary with quality bud.

Add the same volume of water and bring to a boil, followed by one or two pounds of unsalted, fresh creamery butter. Margarine is a no-no, even that omega-3 atrocity, as the CLA-enhanced fats in butter absorb the

THC.

Leave the lid off for the first half hour but partially cover it afterwards so you don't have to continually add water. Keep it under a boil for anywhere from two to eight hours. The longer you boil shake, the better. Keep the hood fan on during this step burn some jasmine incense and try to ignore the stench. I usually spark a doob and play *Call of Duty 2*, catch up on SomethingAwful's Photoshop contests or re-upholster the cushions on my Adirondack chairs.

BY THE TIME you're down, you'll be ready to lay a sheet of cheesecloth in a fine mesh strainer. Carefully pour the flow through the strainer and into a large glass mixing bowl, placing the bowl on a flat surface in the refrigerator. We'll come back to this.

Half as much hot water in the pot boils, with the cheesecloth, for an hour. Strain again into another mixing bowl, wrapping all the weed into the cheesecloth and using a press or citrus juicer to extract the most butter. A bit of clean boiling water will allow one more squeeze.

Throw the steaming mess into the compost or a freezer bag and into the bin. Put the mixing bowl in the refrigerator with its sister and wait for about an episode of *Lost*. Carefully peel off the greenish yellow layer and place it in a shallow glass pan. Typically, the yield is about three quarters of the original amount of butter, and you can freeze amounts as small as

CONTINUES ON NEXT PAGE

Soya Lacquered Duck Breast
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COOKING WITH POT

CONTINUED FROM PREVIOUS PAGE

half-cups. The next stage is up to you! A movie night goes very well with a half cup of melted butter on an enormous bowl of popcorn. Use a combination of Beil's Seasoning and sea salt to help the flavour, and keep a huge mug of chai green tea at hand. Pot cookies are popular, but I warn you that chocolate chips go manky in storage. If you're eating them right away, go ahead or go oatmeal raisin. Some dried mango will do wonders.

This evening, I made cinnamon rolls. The dough didn't need butter, but make sure to mop up all the melted brown sugar filling on the plate. Then, be prepared to be knocked on your ass.

Remember that a body stone is much different than a head stone. You'll have a solid six hours on the jivan before you straighten out



enough to go to bed. Smoke up and go to sleep, or call a cab: you're not OK to drive. You have another couple of groggy hours ahead of you that coffee and night air will not help.

There you have it—Marta Stupor'd's Magic Butter. If you have better bud and don't have 10 hours, try the quick version of the recipe and enjoy. Pot butter—it's a good thing. ♡

EASY POT BUTTER

Break up your dried pot as though planning to roll with it. Melt your butter on low heat (or in a double boiler) and add the bud. Simmer the combination on medium heat until the greenish hues of the pot have all turned brown—perhaps 20 minutes for small batches of an eighth of weed with a pound of butter.

Strain out the herb with cheesecloth, squeezing as much butter as possible from its clutches. The resulting greenish-brown butter comes pre-melted and perfect for use in both baking and getting baked!

MAGIC PEANUT BUTTER SQUARES

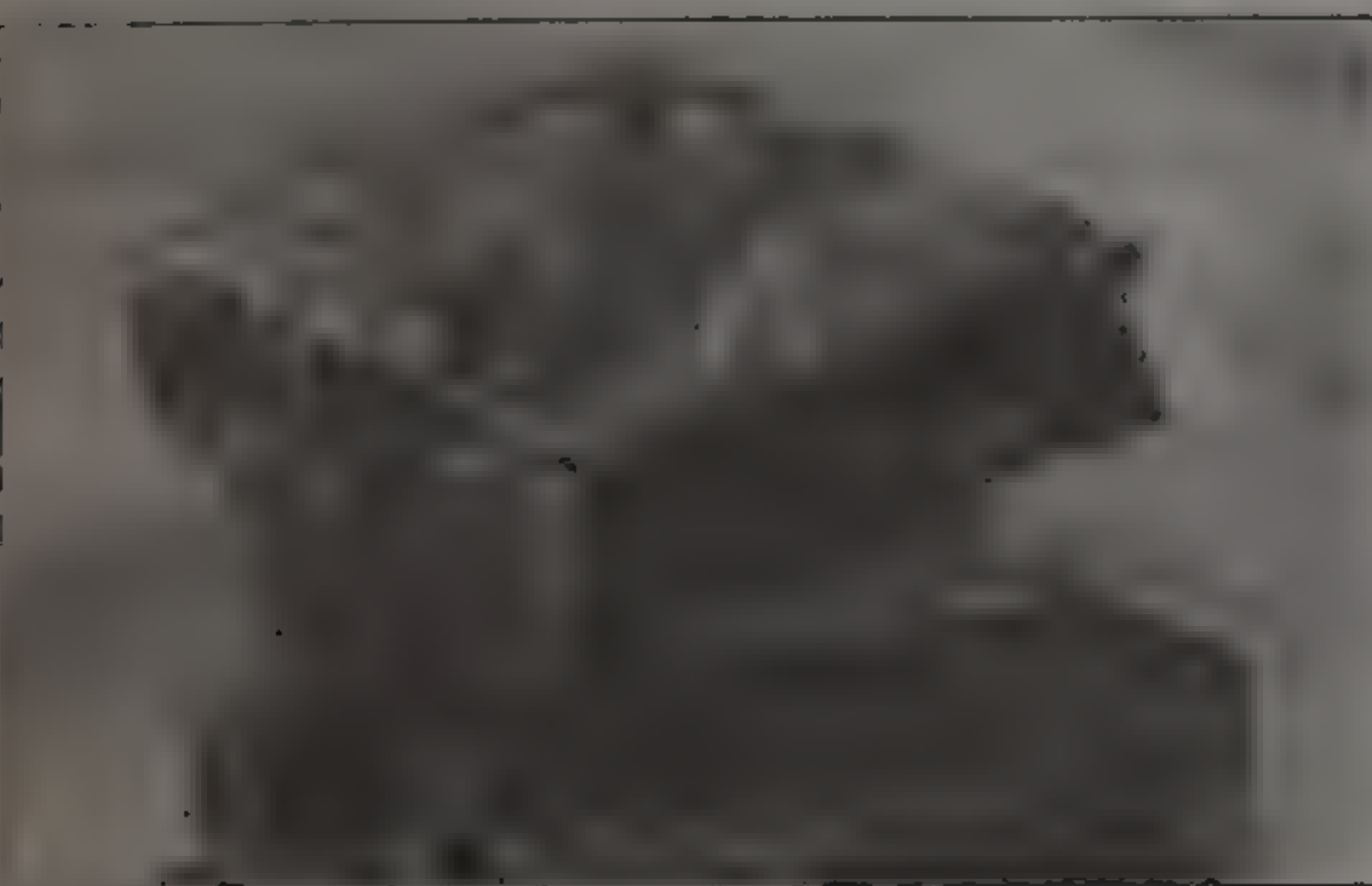
Like pot tea or hash brownies, anyone can chow down on 'shrooms or throw them into boiling water. Why not avoid the entire, horribly-flavoured mess and try some delectable Magic Peanut Butter Squares?

- 1/8 oz (3.5 g) psilocybin
- 12 oz (340 g) butterscotch chips
- 1 cup smooth peanut butter
- 1/2 cup butter (not Magic Butter)
- 1 small bag of multicoloured marshmallows

Grind dried magic mushrooms into dust.

Place butterscotch chips into a heavy-bottomed saucepan and cook over low heat until melted. Stir in the powdered bliss, then add peanut butter and butter. After they have been well stirred, allow the mixture to cool.

Add marshmallows and put into a buttered eight-inch square pan. Store in the refrigerator until you just need to try one, and have three. Put the rest away or feed them to two friends and prepare for six hours of intense visuals.



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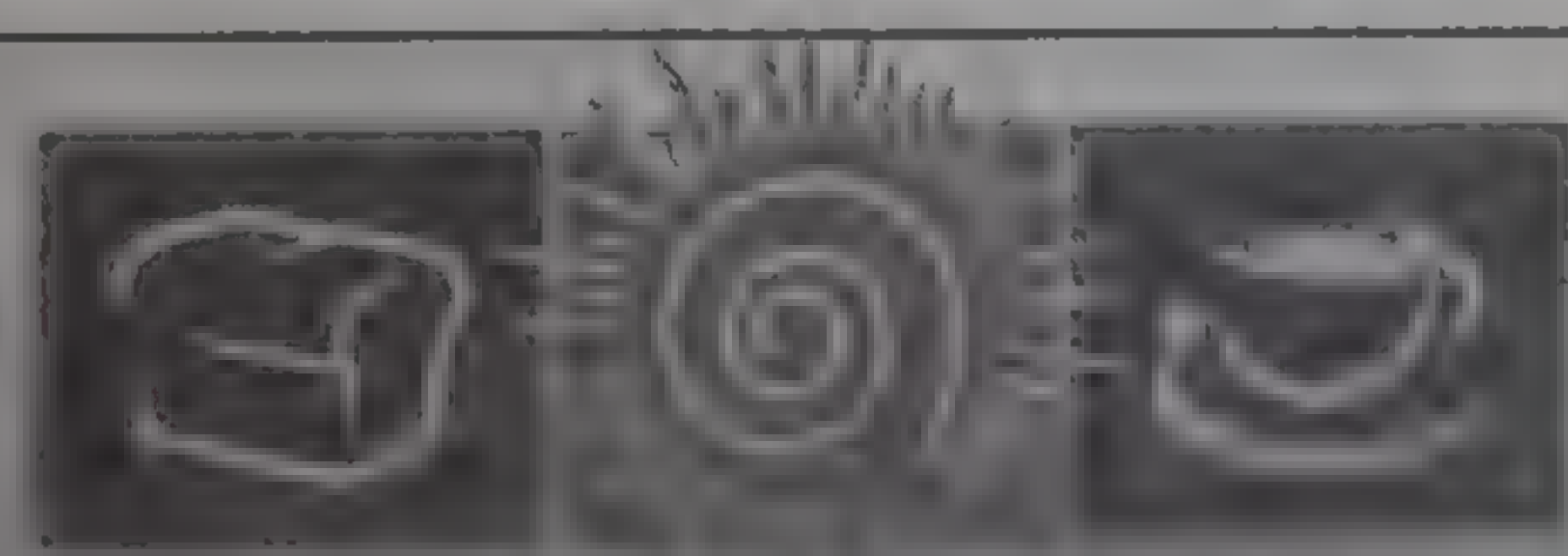
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DAVID SIMPSON

MONDAY APRIL 9
DON BERNER

THURSDAY APRIL 12
SLOWBURN



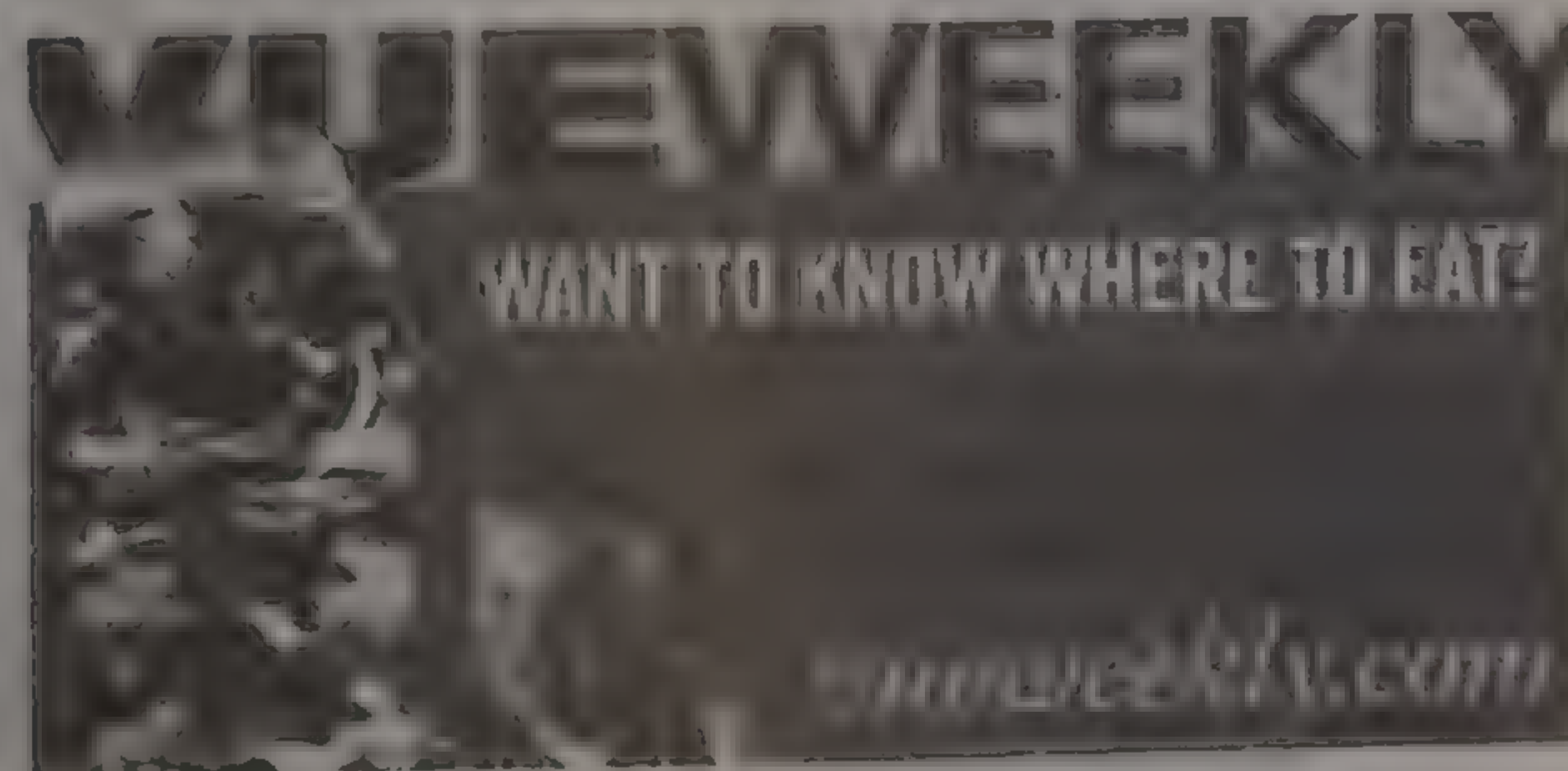
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best dishes

- Appetizers _____
- Soups _____
- Salads _____
- Breads _____
- Steaks _____
- Venison _____
- Sushi _____
- Tapas _____
- Pub Food _____
- Dim Sum _____
- Sandwiches _____
- Hamburgers _____
- French Fries _____
- Wraps _____
- Pizza _____
- Desserts _____
- Chicken Wings _____
- Best Sweets _____
- Snacks (pretzels, bagels) _____

best restaurants

- Best Rest. (Fine Dining) _____
- Best Rest. (Mid Price) _____
- Breakfast _____
- Bakery _____
- Coffee Shop _____
- Tea Shop _____
- Deli _____
- Bavarian _____
- Greek _____
- French _____
- Italian/Pasta _____
- Chinese _____
- Thai _____
- Japanese _____
- East Indian/Tandoori _____
- Mexican/Latin American _____
- Steakhouse _____
- Seafood _____
- Vegetarian _____
- African _____
- Juice Bar _____
- Continental _____

other bests

- Best New Restaurant _____
- Pre-theatre dining _____
- Restaurant for lovers _____
- Innovative menu _____
- Wine list _____
- Beer list _____
- When you only have \$10 _____
- When going solo _____
- Late night/all night _____
- Weekend brunch _____
- Best service _____
- Sports Bar _____
- Best Patio _____
- Best Hotel Restaurant _____
- Ultimate Dining Experience _____
- Best Independent Wine Store _____
- Best For People Watching _____

This is your official ballot. Send it in!

Name: _____

Address: _____

Phone # (daytime): _____

Mail answers to:

Vue Weekly's 9th Annual Golden Fork Awards
10303 108 Street
Edmonton, Alberta
T5J 1L7

or FAX: 426 2889

or email: fork@vueweekly.com



Entries must be received no later than 5 pm, May 4 2007

No duplicate entries. 1 entry per person. Any entries with identical writing to another will be discarded. Standard contest entries also apply.

This year VUEWEEKLY will offer two awards in each category. One for independent and one for chain.

*Chain will be defined as non-Edmonton operated or locations in other cities (exceptions may exist)

*Chain may not be awarded in all categories (Do you know of any chain African restaurants?)

FREE FOOD!



Look at this symbol!! Any restaurant advertising with this symbol wants to be considered by our readers when they vote for Vue Weekly's Golden Fork Awards to be announced on May 10, 2007. The ballot will appear in our April 12, 19 & 26. It asks you to vote for Edmonton's best on our Eighth Annual Reader's Choice Awards for over 50 best food categories.

So watch for the symbol and sample the best of Edmonton's restaurants before you vote. There are great prizes to be won by readers who participate. To make it even more exciting and easier to you and your friends to 'taste test' the fare of some of these establishments, you can win free gift certificates from some of the city's best places for eats.

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Hey diddle diddle, a mysterious meeting at The Dish and Runaway Spoon

TAMIS McLEOD / tamis@vancouverweekly.com

His note said, *Meet me at 8. I'll be in the overcoat with a dish. You bring a spoon.*

I donned a slinky dress for our first date, followed the instructions on the note and strolled through the bistro's doorway under the huge wooden sign. My man of mystery was tucked into a corner table for two, idly flipping a bright plastic dish in his hands. Our eyes met, and I brandished my spoon. He slipped it from my hands, lingering with his touch.

"Thank you," he purred, deadly serious. "Mine appears to have run away."

With that silly comment, I smiled and sat with him at **The Dish and Runaway Spoon's** low wooden table. He had already ordered wine, a Graham Beck Shiraz (\$42). I took a mouthful of the dark, glossy wine and assessed my blind date: cropped hair, dark eyes, stylish chunky glasses and a black-on-black suit. Very urban cool, but a few days' stubble on his chin hinted at the bad boy inside.

I noted a rich, sweet taste in the wine under the flavour of the fruit. Mystery man explained that the wine is packed with chocolate. Good choice. I reached again and again for my glass as I relished the mix of chocolate and berries. "If I keep drinking like this," I thought to myself, "it's going to be a very good date." I'm known to be flirtatious when I'm tipsy.

Perhaps picking up on my softening mood, mystery man leaned forward to stroke my arm and comment on how romantic he felt in this cosy little place. I took the time to look around and thought the room was more homey than romantic. The petite restaurant sat about 40. Partitions and angles provided privacy, and candlelight flickered off warm, ochre-painted walls. He is Italian, so maybe he was trying to tell me that the way to his heart is through food.

Mystery man explained that The Dish's menu was available online. Earlier that day, he had learned that the fare was billed as "contemporary comfort food." Entrées like gourmet mac and cheese or rustic lamb stew provided the comfort, while risotto cakes or pear and Cambazola triangles were definitely on the modern side.

Selections were accented with imaginative salads, soups of the day and a small but elegant list of wines. Cocktails, beer, soft drinks and coffees were also available. According to the website, we were sitting in The Dish—the Runaway Spoon is the catering side.

DESPITE THIS BEING a first date, my companion ordered the Dish Caesar salad with grilled chicken and asiago cheese (\$12.50). That didn't bode well for a goodnight kiss. I chose crab cakes and spinach salad (\$15.25) to eat light.

We made eye contact and conversation while we waited for our food to



HOT DATE

MON - SAT TO 9 PM
THE DISH AND RUNAWAY SPOON
12417 STONY PLAIN ROAD
VANCOUVER

arrive. He told me about a hidden garden in the back, away from the street. "We'll come here in the summer," he said, hinting at his vision of our future. "We'll toast each other with champagne." But I'm a cynic, and we had only just met. I quickly looked down at the table so he couldn't see my skeptical smirk.

I found myself enjoying his company, though. He was witty and charming and let me drink a larger share of the wine—a good strategic move. Our food soon arrived, and as I shook out my napkin I realized I was feeling quite entertained.

I met his eyes, tilted my head and gave him my most dazzling smile. "Thank you for dinner," I said. "I'm pleased that we decided to meet."

He smiled back, shook out his own napkin and replied, "Good. Me, too. Now let's eat." He was definitely a man to be wooed with food.

For the next few minutes, we concentrated on our meals. My crispy, crumbly rounds of crabmeat had a generous touch of spice and I dampened their fire with fresh spinach leaves and sweet mango vinaigrette. The baked crab had also heated the plate, and some of the spinach was warm. It felt like I was tasting two unique and yummiy delicious salads—a cooler salad with chilled bits of mango and a warm one with slices of portobello.

We learned more about each other as we ate. By the time I was only halfway through my meal, my date had already finished his. I know I eat slowly while I talk, but I teased him anyway. He responded by telling me that his salad was really good. The

flavours had fused to make it taste sweet, and it wasn't all that garlicky, he explained. Maybe I would reconsider that goodnight kiss.

OUR PLATES WERE cleared and we declined another bottle of wine. Our

server returned with a tray of dessert choices for the night: mango white chocolate pudding cake, triangles of fudge brownie, spice cake and a caramel pudding (\$6 each). The comfort food theme still applied

I am becoming a fan of mango, and

the pudding cake featured chocolate, so I suggested to my date that we might share it for dessert. He agreed.

Dessert arrived in slices, arranged around a mound of whipped cream drizzled in caramel. Each bite combined cake and pudding with chunks of chocolate, chewy bites of mango and a brown sugar glaze to create a caramel-y, nutty, warm sensation. I quickly finished my slices. My date didn't finish his and instead asked to have what was left packaged for me to take home. Mystery man was catching on: forget diamonds, the way to my heart is through dessert.

Despite my offer to pay my share, mystery man insisted on paying the bill (I peeked: \$90.10 including GST). Then he helped me with my coat, held the door as I went through and walked me across the parking lot's ice with his elbow for support. He reached to open my car door, leaned into my hair and murmured admiration for my vanilla-scented perfume. Then he gently nuzzled his lips against my ear and I felt my knees go weak. He was definitely getting a goodnight kiss.

Will we have a second date? You bet. He'll email another note.

Do we have a future? Hard to say. I'm a very good kisser, but I'm not a very good cook. ♥

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Change is boiling over at the romantic Copper Pot

BY SCOTT KISCOFF/vueweekly.com

From almost every seat at the Copper Pot, the downtown view is one of the most unsung in Edmonton dining. From the tastefully appointed banquettes and tables, I can watch the sun set over the gorgeous River Valley and the lights come on at the Legislature. When night has fallen, the twinkling lights along with the dimly lit room and the cosy banquettes work their magic.

As the restaurant changed hands in early January, my partner and I decided to see if the new owners had any new offerings. James Mancini and Lance Popke, the owners of Ric's Grill downtown, now own the Copper Pot and hope to turn it into their next showpiece. The menu will have changed by press time, but they have kept the old menu up to par in the meantime.

The waitstaff at the Copper Pot was professional and courteous. We were warmly greeted and seated immediately. This may have been because the room was not particularly busy for a Saturday night: only four tables were occupied when we arrived, with a few more seated as we dined.

The room is classy, with the seating enhancing the views—almost all of the seats had a sightline. The tables are near the windows and the banquettes are raised up against the walls. For a date, the banquettes seem somehow more romantic than a simple table.

Our friendly server told us about

FINE DINING
THE SAT TO 10 PM
THE COPPER POT
RESTAURANT
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the new liquor menu already in effect and introduced us to the new cocktails, some of which looked very intriguing. Mancini designed the liquor menu and it all looked tempting. The "Valentino" caught my eye—cranberry vodka, Disaronno Amaretto with citrus and a splash of soda. Alas, it would have to wait until my next visit as I forewent a cocktail in favour of wine with dinner.

WE STARTED WITH a glass of wine each, a red Castle Rock Pinot Noir 2006 (\$10) for my partner and a white Paul Zinc Pinot Gris 2006 from France for me (\$10). My wine was dry, with a sharp aftertaste, but still light. His was very smooth and on the sweeter side, but still very sophisticated. The Castle Rock was so good, we promised to pick up a bottle for ourselves.

The server first brought multigrain and rosemary breads. Though they were parbaked (baked almost all the way elsewhere, then flash-frozen for oven warming at the restaurant), they were definitely above average in taste and texture.

Our appetizers were Edmonton dining standards: calamari and bacon-wrapped scallops. The scallops



were wrapped in Barrhead double-smoked bacon and served with cocktail sauce. These were delicious, as the scallops were barely cooked in the middle with a nice crust on the outside—a tricky thing to do. The Copper Pot gets extra points for using local ingredients—the Barrhead bacon was smoky and flavourful. The calamari was a bit salty, served with tzatziki and a citrus salsa.

There was about a 20-minute wait between our courses, which seemed unjustified considering the room wasn't full and there was plenty of wait staff. Perhaps there were some hold-ups in the kitchen, as frequent loud banging came from the kitchen behind our banquette.

The dinner menu was mostly focused on standard meat and seafood dishes—Coquille St Jacques, lobster Thermidor, oysters Rockefeller, salmon and various types of steak with optional lobster tails. However, there were a few originals such as "East West duck" and a pickerel filet that looked good.

I had ordered the chicken and rib combo (\$24). I wouldn't usually order

something like this, but I had an end-of-winter hankering for meat on the bone. The ribs were fantastic. They were served with a finger bowl and covered in a hoisin citrus sauce which was tangy and pungent. The meat melted off the bone. My chicken was very moist and cooked perfectly. However, it didn't have much flavour other than salt. The dish was garnished with cauliflower, carrots and baby bok choy.

My partner chose a steak and lobster tail (\$29), medium well, which he enjoyed. However, he commented that his steak was slightly undercooked, the four-ounce lobster tail was a tad overcooked and the steak sauce could have used more mushrooms. Finally, his cauliflower was almost raw. I'm guessing the garnishes will be overhauled, as will the cooking practices, along with the new menu.

For dessert, I had a housemade mango cheesecake (\$7) accompanied by a snifter of ruby red Warrens Warrior port (\$7). This combination was recommended by our server and the two did complement each other deliciously, though the cheesecake could

have used some more mango flavour. My partner's hot chocolate crème brûlée (\$7) was delicious, pronounced a slam dunk by a guy that doesn't usually even like desserts. I had a bite and have to say it was mouth-wateringly good. The new chefs make the desserts from scratch.

Even though the Copper Pot's outer appearance is very non-descript, the ambience is lovely and the service excellent. We were well satisfied with our \$125 dinner, plus tip. I'm sure the new owners will exploit this charming room to their advantage. I look forward to dining at the Copper Pot again once their new menu is in place. ▽

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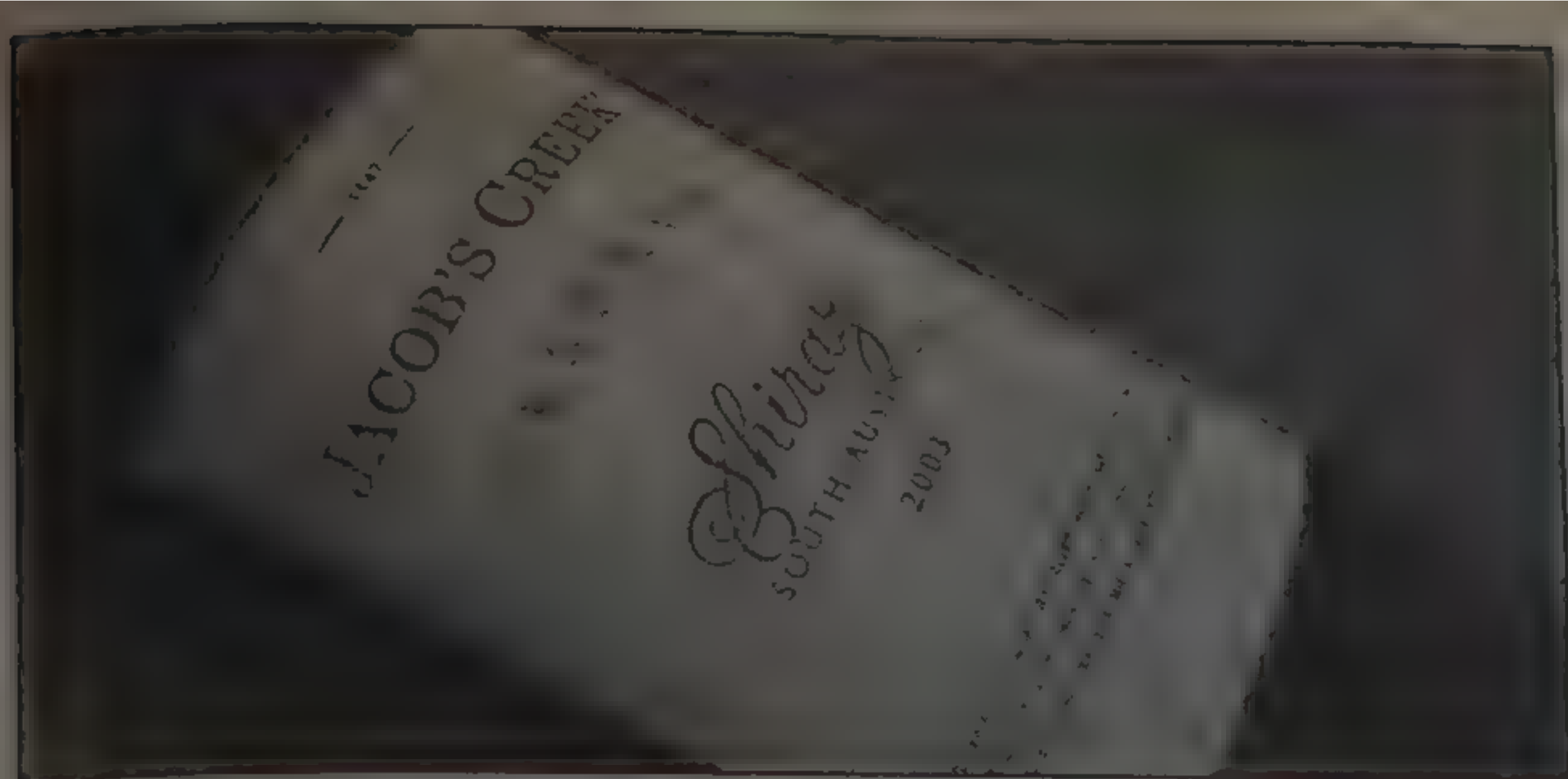
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FOOD NEWS!
DISH
WEEKLY

EASTER DINNER ON A BLUE PLATE You have got to love it when a place does the traditional up right: try double-smoked bone-in ham glazed with real maple syrup from Québec at the Blue Plate this weekend. Served with hot mustard, scalloped potatoes and grilled vegetables for only \$20, this is the meal you dream of as you heat up leftover SPAM on Easter Sunday. The vegetarian-minded can try the stuffed polenta for \$17. Call 429.0740 to reserve.

EASTER (BUNNY) DINNER If you're hankering for something less traditional and much funnier, the Blue Pear offered a warm, panko-crusted rabbit terrine as an appetizer in their five-course prix fixe menu last month. Served with braised fennel, red currant port sauce and grainy mustard as an appetizer, you can call them at 482.7178 to see if it's still available. Unfortunately, other places I tried told me that they considered it cruel to serve bunnies for Easter.

Dish Weekly spills the beans on culinary happenings around town. Got an event, an announcement or some unsubstantiated gossip? Email dish@vueweekly.com or fax 426.2889.



Here's the bottle that broke a bad streak

WINE
NICE LEGS
JAMES LEE
nicelegs@vuwweekly.com

JACOB'S CREEK RESERVE SHIRAZ 2006
JACOB'S CREEK WINERY, AUSTRALIA,
\$21

Look around your house. Do you see Yellow Label? Ernest and Julio? How about Boone's? If you do, pick up the bottle and dump it down the drain. Now that your home has been cleansed, go to your local liquor store and ask for Jacob's Creek Reserve Shiraz.

Cough up the whopping 21 bucks and enjoy a truly amazing wine.

Lately, most of the wines I've tasted have received mediocre or downright bad reviews. It's been a dry run. I've even tried some bargain wines, but they mostly sucked. The situation has gotten so bad that my editor is asking me if I will ever give another positive wine review.

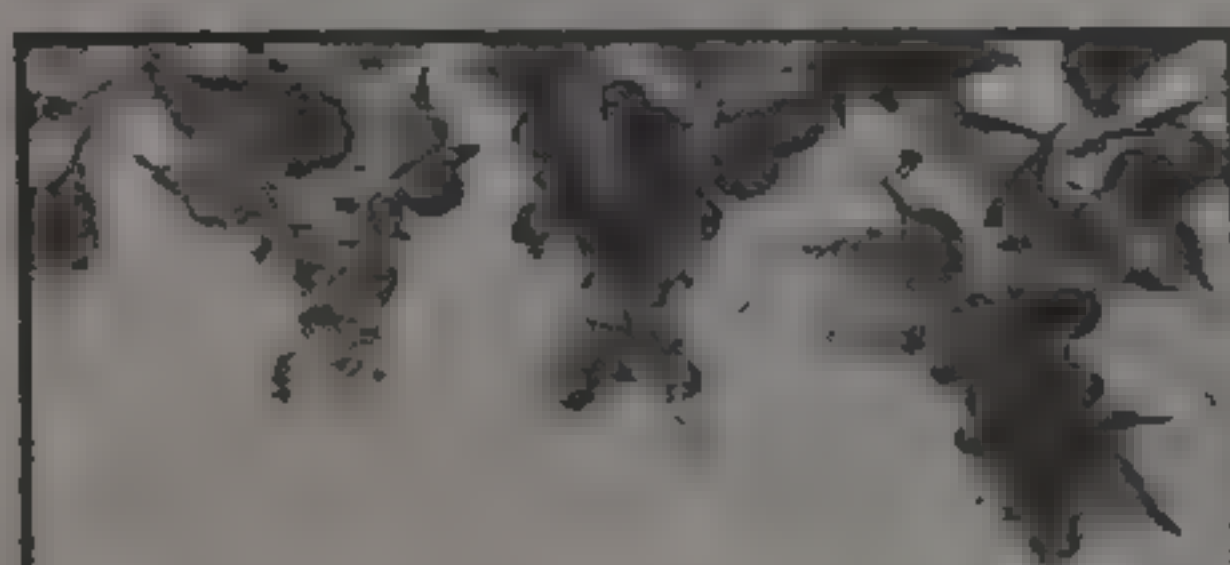
Well, both my editor and I are pleased to have finally found that elusive positive

When I first opened this bottle, I was struck by its wonderfully rich, fruity nose. The scent of this deep red Shiraz exploded in my senses. The strong—yet not overpowering—odour may have been a bit too tanniny, but I suspected that would subside in time.

As I took my first sip, I was equally pleased with the wine's flavour. The full body flowed through my palate with a pleasant consistency that left just a hint of fruit at the back. The fruit flavour drew me in for another sip. This time, the hints of plum and blackberry were evened out by a lingering spice that kept the flavours rich and feisty.

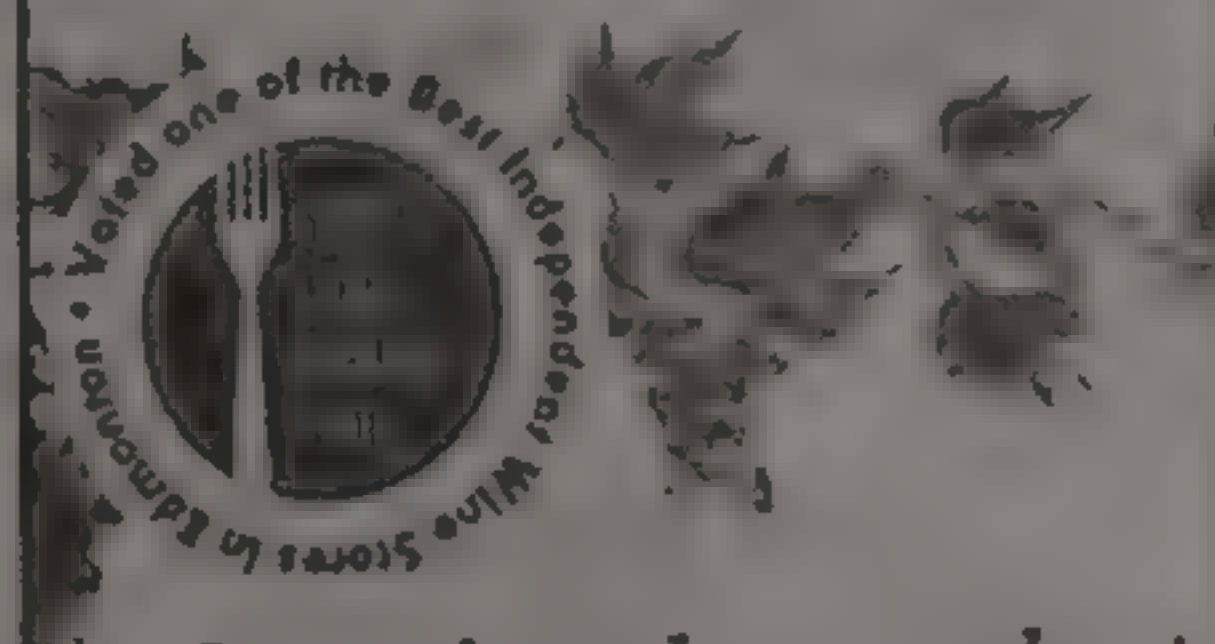
As the wine opened up, much of this Shiraz's assertiveness drifted away to leave behind a well-rounded, flavourful glass of wine. This wine will hold up against rich game or cheese dishes, but I believe that it is best paired with beef, lamb or pork.

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Feeling blue? Try Sapphire's inclusive brand of trendy tastiness

DESIGNER IMAGE (LIVING) / jennifer@vuwweekly.com

On the occasional childless evening, my husband and I ~~do not behave like adults~~. Often, I have a huge list of inconvenient things to do with an inquisitive preschooler, including whitewater rafting and paintball. Never mind that I never wanted to do either, but when the options are removed, they seem much more appealing.

Sapphire Lounge was in my to-do file. The hip, very trendy lounge beckoned me to try one of its many famous martinis. I completely forgot that even in the era BC (before children), my husband and I would not have fit in with *The O.C.* look-alikes at each table.

So on an adventurous, warm March evening, we headed off to the fashionable spot for a luxurious dinner. My excitement turned into nervousness when I realized that, in my haste, I hadn't changed out of my fashionable track pants and luxurious t-shirt. I started to feel like I did in junior high, wondering what all the other girls would be wearing.

Walking into the blue-lit lounge, my fears began to subside. I realized that this was not some bump and grind club but rather an intimate, relaxing atmosphere to dine and drink with friends. The lucent bar reflected soft white lights and a calming faux waterfall was the centrepiece of the main wall. At 8 pm on a Saturday evening, the cosy space was not quite full. We were able to find a spot among the classy black tables and leather benches.

Unfortunately, due to a killjoy doctor with a prescription pad, I was not able to try one of the fabled martinis and had to settle for a Shirley Temple (\$3.30). Our server promised it in a martini glass. My husband, not being a cruel man, did not drink without me and went with his usual Pepsi (\$2.83). Slightly annoyed by our lack of fun drinks, I turned to the menu to compensate with fun food.

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Sapphire had an extensive tapas menu, though the entrée and dessert selections were much smaller. A well-rounded combination of classics such as chicken wings and salad rolls was paired with more innovative fare. With tapas ranging from \$5-

12, this would be the perfect location to share a few munchies after a movie. However, we were here for dinner and decided that we should just settle on one.

AFTER SOME DEBATE, we decided on the wasabi crab dip with roasted garlic and artichoke hearts (\$9). Due to the more limited selection, choosing our entrées was less of a challenge. I was immediately drawn to the blue crab-stuffed chicken breast (\$18), while my husband went with the

seafood farfalle with spicy rose sauce (\$16).

Shortly after we began to relax with our drinks, our tapas arrived. A large bowl of bubbling dip was garnished with seasoned baked pita chips. My husband was impressed by the amount of crab in the creamy dip; too often a dish like this arrives watered down. There was a range of flavours that danced on my tongue, from the slightly sweet roasted garlic to the softness of the artichoke hearts. The wasabi gently warmed my palate and

blended well with the velvety cream. Finished with broiled cheese, this dip was as good as they come.

Scraping the last of the dip from the bowl, we waited in anticipation for the next course. An appetizer should not only fill some space in your stomach but also further tempt your dining experience. We would not be disappointed.

Our entrées were just as well-presented as our appetizer. The chef spent some time really considering how to blend sights and flavours in harmonious accord. My chicken was delicately stuffed with blue crab, spinach and red pepper. The breast was gently seared to maintain its tender interior. An accompanying rice pilaf was a fluffy mélange of rice, green onions and yellow peppers. Broiled asparagus, carrots, snow peas and broccoli completed the dish.

My husband's dish was equally gratifying. A large bowl of farfalle noodles were coated in a spicy marinara cream sauce and mixed with mussels, clams, calamari and shrimp. My husband was content to see the absence of vegetables in his bowl, which he said distracted him from the important seafood.

The portions were substantial! I was unable to finish my meal but—as usual—my husband had no problems polishing his off. We had tickets for a 9:40 show, so I was a little sad to be unable to linger over coffee and dessert. For just under \$50 plus tax and tip, we relaxed in a comfortable atmosphere with some superior food. This was just what the doctor had ordered for two overworked parents.

As we left, I realized that from the time I stepped into Sapphire, I didn't think about the people surrounding me. I didn't even consider how dishevelled I must have looked to everyone else, and I couldn't have cared less what they thought. What I liked best about Sapphire was that everyone is made to feel like they fit in. If only high school was that easy. ▼



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Ephemeral Elvira Santamaria creates new rhythms

MARY CHRISTA O'KEEFE / marychrista@vuweekly.com

'Action art' is, for me, a larger term than performance. It's the art of creating experiences, meaning through feeling. Not objects, although in the process objects can appear or create an experience. Action art is actions as art."

Elvira Santamaria, whose latest work *Rhythm and Time* was shown at Latitude 53 last weekend, is a tiny woman with beautiful freckled skin and a heavy mass of dark brown hair streaked with white. In person, the Mexico City-born artist gives the impression of being powered by a strong internal dynamo—the air around her feels electrified, like coming too near humming power lines. She'd probably attribute this quality to her practice, grounded in intent and mindfulness, but her history suggests the dynamo was spinning long before she became an artist of international stature.

"You have to know it was very conservative when I was in art school in Mexico," she explains in her emphatic Spanish-accented English. "There was only painting, sculpture, and printmaking. I started to know about conceptual art, art with the body, with presence—action art—and I was very excited. I wanted to practice it. The idea that a human being was being artwork, that we could shape our lives through our acts is interesting to me. So I left art school."

She delivers the concluding sentence with concrete finality, as if the death of the object in her mind made it completely out of the question to stay in school and complete her studies in painting.

"Creativity can help human beings evolve in other directions," she elaborates. "Through experience, we afford to change all our impressions in life that don't make us happy. We can transform them. Maybe we do not forget some awful moment, but we can transform it. I was excited by seeing this, in this art practice. I couldn't stay at art school after that—it felt bad. Home is where I feel well. If I do not feel well in a place, I must move, I must change, I must transform."



REVUE

MAR 29 - APR 01
RHYTHM AND TIME
BY ELVIRA SANTAMARIA
LATITUDE 53 (10248 - 106 STREET)

Nothingness, apparently, never daunts Santamaria.

"In Mexico in those days, there were very few practicing that discipline. So I started without anything,

learning by doing. I found ways to develop this practice."

SANTAMARIA SPECIALIZES in "in situ" actions. She comes to a site with no preconceptions save for a rough idea of theme—her recent piece at Latitude 53 explores "rhythm and time"—and a set of principles for her actions. She dislikes repeating herself, although she may develop elements further

from one work to the next. She's disinterested in documentation. She tends to accept invitations that offer periodicity, so that she can return to the site, respond to it anew and move her previous day's labours forward.

"These principles are essential to art: time, space, presence," she declares. "Through these three elements, you are sensitive to context, environment, people."

Santamaria clarifies her position with regard to an audience: "I am not proposing people interact with me. The way to people is through my actions, how I use the space, how people can be there or feel free to leave. That's the way I invite them."

Her initial concept usually suggests a physical way into the metaphor. "I like to use very common and simple things that have lost their meaning and ask how we can have other experiences with them."

Latitude 53's Todd Janes describes the culmination of her piece. (The space will bear evidence of Santamaria's presence for another week or so, and in May, Latitude will host its annual performance art festival VisualEyez, bringing more international artists like Santamaria to the city.)

"She started with piles of salt and she'd lie down and blow salt across the main space. It was very slow and quiet, just this 'whosh' from her breath," he explains. "The pattern reminded me of Edmonton's main time of year, the detritus and salt on the street. She gathered her hair strands that had fallen and threaded them through needles and hung them on walls—really subtle actions like that."

"On the last day, she used a piece of wood to smoke a large pane of glass which she played with like a mirror or shield," Janes continues. "She was, I think, playing with how we look at the past. At the end, she put tiny candles on fishhooks and suspended them over ceiling beams. She lit them and turned the lights off, and they ascended until they burnt to the quick and would fall to the floor. As the last candle fell, it went dark. It was an emotional experience, for sure."

Santamaria notes, "I'm not the first to say that we create time—human time doesn't exist. Since prehistoric times, we noticed simple important changes and counted time, like moon cycles. Now we have artifacts and machines to measure all, to infinitum. We have rhythms in societies, like work weeks. So if we can create all that, why not create new rhythms? Why not create new time?"

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Some sitcomy but great laughs are *What Lies Before Us*

DAVID B. BROWN / THEATRE-SCENE.COM

There's a stigma that comes with the word "sitcom" that's among the most deserved stigmas to be attached to any word in the English language.

Notwithstanding the fact that it's pretty much indisputably been the dominant comedic art form since television took over—the stand-up comic's pension fund—you'd be hard-pressed to find a more formulaic, uninspired genre/format in the history of human artistic endeavour.

The finest examples of the form—*Seinfeld*, the UK *Office*, *Arrested Development*—are considered so mostly because they destroy every convention except the half-hour running time, and even the second-tier accepted classics are essentially paint-by-numbers, albeit with vivid colours ("is this that episode where *Frasier* gets in trouble because he's so fussy?").

So it's not light-heartedly or happily that I compare Morris Panych's latest, *What Lies Before Us*, to a sitcom. Not a bad sitcom, mind you—*Frasier*-level, at least—but it's nevertheless disappointing that this inspired mix of *Waiting for Godot* and a cynic's *Heritage Minute* comes out as three characters in search of a laugh track.

I suspect some of it may well have to do with Jim Millan's direction—I may have to re-watch some of my Panych, but I can't remember a

REVUE

TO SUN, APR 25
WHAT LIES BEFORE US
DIRECTED BY JIM MILLAN
WRITTEN BY MORRIS PANYCH
STARRING MATTHEW MACFADZEN,
DAVID STORCH, WAYNE SUJO
CITADEL THEATRE (9829-101A AVENUE), \$30-\$50

comedic cadence this jarring in any of his other work. Though perhaps that's not entirely fair to Millan, who surely has some sense of humour more alive than this from his work with the Kids in the Hall's stage show: Panych certainly sets up most of the laughs in the sitcom-standby leading statement/witty rejoinder/pause for effect, and though you can't fault the man's punch lines, it's odd to be expecting a rim shot from two railway surveyors stuck in a tent in the middle of the Rockies in the 1800s.

Obviously the play—which is essentially the aforementioned surveyors, cantankerous Scot Ambrose (David Storch) and dimwit Brit Keating (Matthew MacFadzen), bickering for 90 minutes, occasionally in the presence of their meek servant Wing (Wayne Sujo), while they wait to be pulled out of their remote site—isn't feigning at naturalism, but the rote nature of the set 'em up, knock 'em down humour sabotages the *Godot* half of the earlier equation, trading absurdity and provocation for cleverness.

It's more frustrating when you consider it's not entirely abandoned:

there are some wonderfully ridiculous moments, such as when Ambrose breaks his leg and schedules a session of screaming in pain every hour on the hour, but they're more than overshadowed.

IF THE PLAY'S CONVENTIONALITY is saved by anything, it's the ease with which Storch and MacFadzen take on their antagonistic roles (Sujo is largely just around to be abused in a relationship with MacFadzen that only furthers the sitcom feel). I didn't invoke *Frasier* for nothing, though: Storch has all sorts of fun spraying invective at the MacFadzen's dim-witted, blindly optimistic dolt—actually, in its funnier moments, *What Lies Before Us* is essentially Panych's *Lawrence & Holloman* in 19th-century clothes, which is probably another reason I'm complaining about conventionality here—and MacFadzen has just as much fun strumming an out-of-tune guitar and getting Storch to check out his crabs.

I have a feeling this is coming off a touch more negative than I intended—the audience was in stitches throughout, and I'd be lying if I claimed this wasn't a thoroughly funny piece of theatre. Still, though, given that a far more inventive, fulfilling Panych play is showing on the Citadel's other stage, it seems strange to settle for something you could more or less get with your basic cable. ▼



Life may be the pits, but *Cherry Orchard* blooms

BRIAN GIBSON / brian@vancouverweekly.com

At the Timms Centre, the stage for *The Cherry Orchard* holds just a few chairs, a bookcase, a desk and a doll house; one large frost-laden branch from the orchard outside can be seen through a frame.

That framework for this stylish production has been impeccably crafted. Director Richard Greenblatt and designer Snezana Pesic have made the set minimalist and austere. Costumes are lean, elegant and subtly filled with character, from the top-coat and buckle shoes in which the past-bound servant Feers (Katherine Gorham) totters around, to the feather-capped, pantalooned look of governess Carlotta (Tracy Leigh Campbell).

The folk music and choreography—a ballroom dance, Carlotta's magic tricks, the bookend scenes of a crowd awaiting a spirited arrival and commemorating a bitter departure—add to the play's foreboding. Forlorn mother Lyubov Ranevskaya's (Amanda Lisman) looming loss of her estate and precious cherry orchard at an August auction is a tragic harbinger of Mother Russia's many losses to come.

With the fading aristocracy as a backdrop to confrontations between eager capitalist Lopachin (Darren Dolynski) and roving student-dreamer Petya (Stafford Perry), Chekhov's final play looks ahead to the Russian revolution. But its concern with extracting wealth from the land, its call of

PREVIEW

MAR 29 - APR 7 (8 PM)
THE CHERRY ORCHARD
DIRECTED BY RICHARD GREENBLATT
WRITTEN BY ANTON CHEKHOV
TRANSLATED BY JOHN MURRELL
STARRING MEREDITH BAILEY, KATE BATHMAN,
TRACY LEIGH CAMPBELL, DARREN DOLYNSKI,
KATHERINE GORHAM, ALANA HAWLEY,
BEN MCIVOR, JEFFREY OLYNEK, STAFFORD PERRY,
ADVAH SOUDACK, PAUL WELCH, AMANDA LISMAN
STUDIO THEATRE (U OF A CAMPUS),
\$8-\$20

"Change or perish," its sense of a storm building on the horizons of a "prairie," seemingly "endless, running on forever," and the callous treatment of the poor in a world where the monied classes can still retreat into their casual and cavalier wealth, reflect a 21st-century picture back at us here in Alberta.

CALGARY PLAYWRIGHT John Murrell's translation and Greenblatt's direction nicely tease out Chekhov's resounding questions, even if the play echoed Carlotta's winking joke, "I need a better audience," on the night I saw it—the audience only seemed interested in spurts and usually ignored the play's rich humour, perhaps refusing to recognize Chekhov's line, "Russians are the funniest beings on earth when they're serious." And Petya's monologue decrying intellectuals' divorce from reality—"what medicine

is there in their doctoral dissertations for Mother Russia's slow death?"—rings all the louder on campus.

Only Feers looks back fondly on the old days, when Lopachin's grandfather was a slave, but liberation for Russian serfs meant "they weren't free, they were just poor." In a deftly foregrounded scene, only Lyubov is compassionate enough to give a passing vagrant money as the idealists and pragmatists around her keep a horrified distance. The visionary Petya is too consumed by self-exalting love and dim optimism to tackle what he gives lip service to, a past "so putrid and disfigured that we can't even let the undertaker in to bear it away."

Yet in a world where the refrain is "God, life is awful," Greenblatt has fine-tuned the play's wonderfully comic scenes, with Lopachin's paraphrases of Shakespeare, the grumbling Feers's deafness, Chekhov's actor jokes and the sloshing mix of melancholy and ridiculousness in the aristocrats' laments.

Dolynski stands out as Lopachin, playing the country boy-turned-success with a mixture of slight awkwardness, in the face of a world only just starting to turn his way, and an avid ferocity for deal-making and property-buying. Dolynski turns Lopachin's revelation of the auction result into one of the play's best scenes, where his boastfulness becomes the last axe to fall on the



orchard, hacking through the house's stunned silence. Amanda Lisman often lends Lyubov Ranevskaya a wonderfully strained air.

Campbell's accent is shaky, while some scenes—especially Lyubov's story of her escape to France—need

more spark in order to stoke the exposition into fiery drama. This is, ultimately, a production that falls short of the immense power latent in Chekhov's play, mostly because of an inexperienced cast, but it's still a vision worth seeing. ▼

There comes a day when we all have to cross the blue line of life

DIE-NASTY

DIRTY LAUNDRY

dirtylaundry@vancouverweekly.com

In his tight, bright pink shirt and equally tight slacks, team Captain Derrick Capilano laid out some advice: "You shouldn't cheat around on your wife, you might get a chick pregnant!"

As for the rest of the team, goalie Hogie Oogachakka removed his platform elevator shoes and discovered his wife left him for a little personal vacation. Sadly, Rookie all-star Dwayne Minsky went looking for his mother and found tell-tale bloodstains.

Speaking of blood, or at least general evil, it seemed to be present all over. It's a good thing that pseudo-psychic Doris Doobie can smell it. "It smells like French fries and sulphur," she explained. Then at her séance, commentator Skeets channelled several murdered people before seeing himself strangling Hogie in order to date the man's wife. And Doris, Jamie-Majors Capilano and organist Jean all promised not to tell anyone about this ...

But maybe Skeets is on to something; team owner Ty Knotley recently tried to strangle his ex-wife and other team owner Diane, and the Ty and Diane had sex all through the first period of this week's game against the New York Rangers. Unfortunately, Diane was later seen making out with Rangers Captain Johnny Broadway ... and Ty's looking at Jean a lot lately, saying, "Jean's hot!"



It was a classic Die-Hards game: Hogie skated out with confidence, drank some beer, missed the shot of whiskey offered him by proxy Coach Burl but didn't miss any of the shots on net to end the game in a 2-0 shutout. What a coach Burl was—at once praising his seniors while yelling at his son, benching him for no reason and

making him take Hogie's penalty time

But at least some good came out of it all. Doris wasn't liking Burl's aura, then Dwayne accusing his father of killing his mother was enough to make Burl break; Burl was crying at the Commercial Hotel, at the rink and at the lounge. He screamed out a drunken confession to



Derrick and Hogie, and then cried some more. So then, finally, Dwayne gave Burl the chance to turn himself in, or "cross the blue line of life," as Hogie put it

Then with all of the death more or less under control, there was some quiet time for the Die-Hards. Ty and Skeets drank gin, with Ty deciding that he can't enjoy

love anymore and Skeets realizing that his life would be better with Hogie dead. Jean and Hogie shared a quiet talk about being alone, confessing to being confused and clueless.

Next week the Die-Hards should be enjoying the laurels of their winning streak. **V**

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Released truths will set you free

CAROLYN NIKODYM / carolyn@vuwweekly.com

When I meet up with Margaret Macpherson at a Southside café, handcuff earrings dangle from her ears, and she's got on a matching necklace.

But with a confidence that comes with both experience and pursuing your passion, Macpherson doesn't seem like she is anybody's prisoner—especially with the publication of her debut novel *Released* last fall.

While no stranger to the writing game—she has published several works of non-fiction, a book of short stories and worked as a journalist for some 20 years—you get the sense Macpherson needed to give birth to the book that had been growing in her over the years.

"Your first novel is a bit of a child," she says. "It's either going to make it or it's not."

Well, it looks like this baby is going to make it. The book was nominated for the Mary Scorer award, part of the Manitoba Writing and Publishing Awards, with winners being announced at the end of the month.

Highly personal—but not autobiographical, except in the most rudimentary sense—*Released* tells the tale of Ruthie "Toothie" Callis, a woman who finds herself reliving a volatile relationship after she happens upon a newspaper clipping about a recently released prisoner.

At least, that's what the back of the book says. While it has to be difficult to encompass a book in a few sentences, *Released* is much, much more than a story of survival. Yes, there are certainly some harrowing moments to digest, Macpherson also brings a lot of humour and humility to Ruthie. She uses Ruth's story to investigate ideas that have been percolating in her fertile mind.

When Macpherson brings us back to Ruthie's childhood up in Northern Canada, we are reeled into the young woman's world of youthful exploration. In the "summer of Jax," she slowly befriends another girl over a shared love of a pair of abandoned puppies. The two girls tromp through town and the woods with the dogs without a care in the world.

But as Ruthie learns of Jax's circumstances—about how she was all but abandoned by her own family at a school hostel for the summer, about how she got the strap from the supervisors there—we bear witness to the deliberate shedding of Ruthie's innocent skin.

LIKE ANY PERSON, she tries on several different personas throughout her life—especially her youth. After the "summer of Jax" comes the "summer of Jesus," where Ruthie tries fundamental and evangelical religion on for size.

"A common, common occurrence with young girls of Ruth's age is they fall in love with horses or they fall in love with God," Macpherson says. "It's sort of a typical thing, so I was using that to get to something that I'd been mulling around for a long time.

PREVIEW

BY MARGARET MACPHERSON
RELEASED
SIGNATURE EDITIONS, \$19.95

"Ruth's relationship with the One True Church and sort of the fanatical side of things to kind of get to the idea of selflessness and sort of the gospel of service to the exclusion of self," she continues. "I think it's a trap that many, many young women fall into, particularly good girls, good Christian girls—doesn't have to be Christian—or good Muslim girls. That's something I've thought about for a long time."

Macpherson is concerned that she may sound glib about the horses-or-Jesus thing, and even that that part of the narrative may draw some strong criticism from evangelical Christians, but like with the character of Ruthie, she applies a compassionate hand to her internal debate in *Released*.

"We talk a lot these days about Islamic fundamentalism, and we rarely talk about Christian fundamentalism and I think that they are equal-

how it's going to play out.

WHAT IS ESPECIALLY compelling about Macpherson's narrative about Ian is that she treats him fairly—this is no simple men-are-bastards story. In the way she uncovers his personality, she reveals what those who have had an abuser deal with regularly—conflicted feelings of love and hatred.

"Ultimately, it's a book about forgiveness," Macpherson says. "Forgiveness is what could free the world—in the broader sense."

Macpherson explains that she tried to keep the story layered and varied as she investigated the ideas of redemption, punishment and selflessness. Ultimately, she wanted *Released* to become whatever her reader brought to the story. Religious symbolism dances between compassionate ones and fire-and-brimstone ones. The differences between what shows and what hides play out in the choices Macpherson makes in the placement of the different elements of the story.

The transitions from the Ian story, the Jax story, the "Toothie" story and the Jesus story take on a meaning of their own after we are properly introduced to Ian, a broken man with a penchant for the drink. Like the alcoholic they emulate, the transitions are either perfectly smooth, going from Ian's darkness to Jax's shadowy narrative, or they are jarring, going from her loving parents to Ian's tired selfishness.

Released reaches its reader on such a deeply truthful level, it's difficult to imagine that Macpherson's personal story isn't hiding in Ruthie's narrative. And this is actually one of Macpherson's fears.

"It has to read as though it is real," she counters. "It's all real none of it is true. It's all true—emotionally true—but none of it is real."

FOR ME, THE ONLY place the novel doesn't ring terribly true is in how Macpherson deals with the

sense of place. While I certainly got a clear picture of the locations, certain information was left vague, and especially during the bits where Ian and Ruth are hitching around, I felt adrift because I didn't have a sense if they were on the East Coast or in the middle of the country. This very well may have been deliberate, and it's a minor point on my part, but it just didn't work for me.

I finally work up the courage to ask Macpherson about her handcuff's jewelry—you never know about these things. Either she was really into bondage or she was being ironic, but it wasn't anything so sordid or po-mo. Her publisher Karen Haughian gave her the jewelry to celebrate the launch of *Released*. Now she wears her handcuffs when she goes out to talk about her book.

Well, if her long and varied career as a writer wasn't an indication that Macpherson didn't entirely choose writing as passion, the handcuffs say it all—but even then, they don't say it nearly as well as she can. ▀



ly as dangerous," she says. "And that's why the book is causing me some trepidation. There's a huge population of radical, right-wing, Bush, North American supporters down there that are televangelizing and perpetrating really dangerous theology. And the reason they are dangerous is because they are devoid of love. And really if you think about the gospels, it's a gospel of love. It's not fear-based."

Macpherson volleys between the different years and experiences in Ruth's life, and it's as if we're getting to know a friend, as if we're sharing in her memory. We all know a woman who has been in an explosive and abusive environment and who had a love affair with Jesus in her tween years—perhaps we are that woman.

It speaks volumes that *Released* elicits a feeling of dread for Ruth as she pursues a relationship with the insecure, older Ian without feeling formulaic or predictable. We may know that things will turn ugly for the young woman if she doesn't let him go, but we don't necessarily know

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Helping to open The Doors of Perception

BOOKS | **HOPSCOTCH**
JUSTIN BRANN
hopscotch@vancouverweekly.com

Books made me take drugs. Okay, music, general rebelliousness and very likely some fundamental predisposition toward shoe gazing and altered states of consciousness were also significant factors—but books were enormously persuasive, with one in particular holding a prominent position of influence.

Written in 1954, Aldous Huxley's *The*

dane surface. I wanted to penetrate the fabric of perception, and Huxley seemed a trustworthy guide.

Already 50 and established as a writer of novels and essays (in which drugs played a frequent role), Huxley's introduction to mescaline was at once soberly approached (the dosage was administered by an "investigator" who monitored Huxley for the trip's duration) and unrestrained in response.

Huxley's interest in psychedelics grew from his general fascination with mystic experience, yet his considerable intellect and skepticism kept his investigation well on the safe side of flakiness. I hadn't read *The Doors of Perception* since my teens, but on returning to it, I suffered none of the disappointment that sometimes accompanies a revisit to one's objects of youthful enthusiasm. On the contrary, I think I relate to it more deeply now.

"I had expected," Huxley writes, "visions of many-coloured geometries, of animated architectures ... symbolic dramas trembling perpetually on the verge of the ultimate revelation."

What Huxley actually experienced connected more closely with the texture of immediate sensations. He sees "a slow dance of golden lights" and "sumptuous red surfaces," but the world Huxley enters via mescaline isn't the world of alien visions, rather, "it existed out there, in what I could see with my eyes open."

HUXLEY DOES INDEED AWAKEN to Blake's "infinity in a grain of sand," but he does so through a dialogue with the tactile world surrounding him, through observing the radiant, complex beauty of flowers (and that marvelous awareness of plants breathing), through books and printed images, through sudden awe over the sublime nature of drapery, which he describes as "living hieroglyphs," and "a

major theme of all plastic arts."

Huxley looks at his trousers, at prints of Van Gogh's chairs, at the undulating textiles in Antoine Watteau's paintings: "Not an inch of smooth surface here, not a moment of peace or confidence, only a silken wilderness of countless tiny pleats and wrinkles ... " Though he begins *The Doors* clarifying the existential dilemma of individuality and separateness between people, Huxley, who claims to have never been a very visual person, suddenly seizes upon a way of accessing a great painter's casual method of visualizing life's intractable uncertainty through the ubiquitous unruliness of surfaces. It's exhilarating to read his discovery, to witness how Huxley's ode to drapery ascends from what first appears to be a druggy reverie over minutiae to something of tremendous insight.

Yet while Huxley spontaneously connects with the imaginative inroads of others while on mescaline, he also

confesses to having a lack of interest in actual people while tripping.

"This participation in the manifest glory of things left no room, so to speak, for the ordinary, for the necessary concerns involving persons."

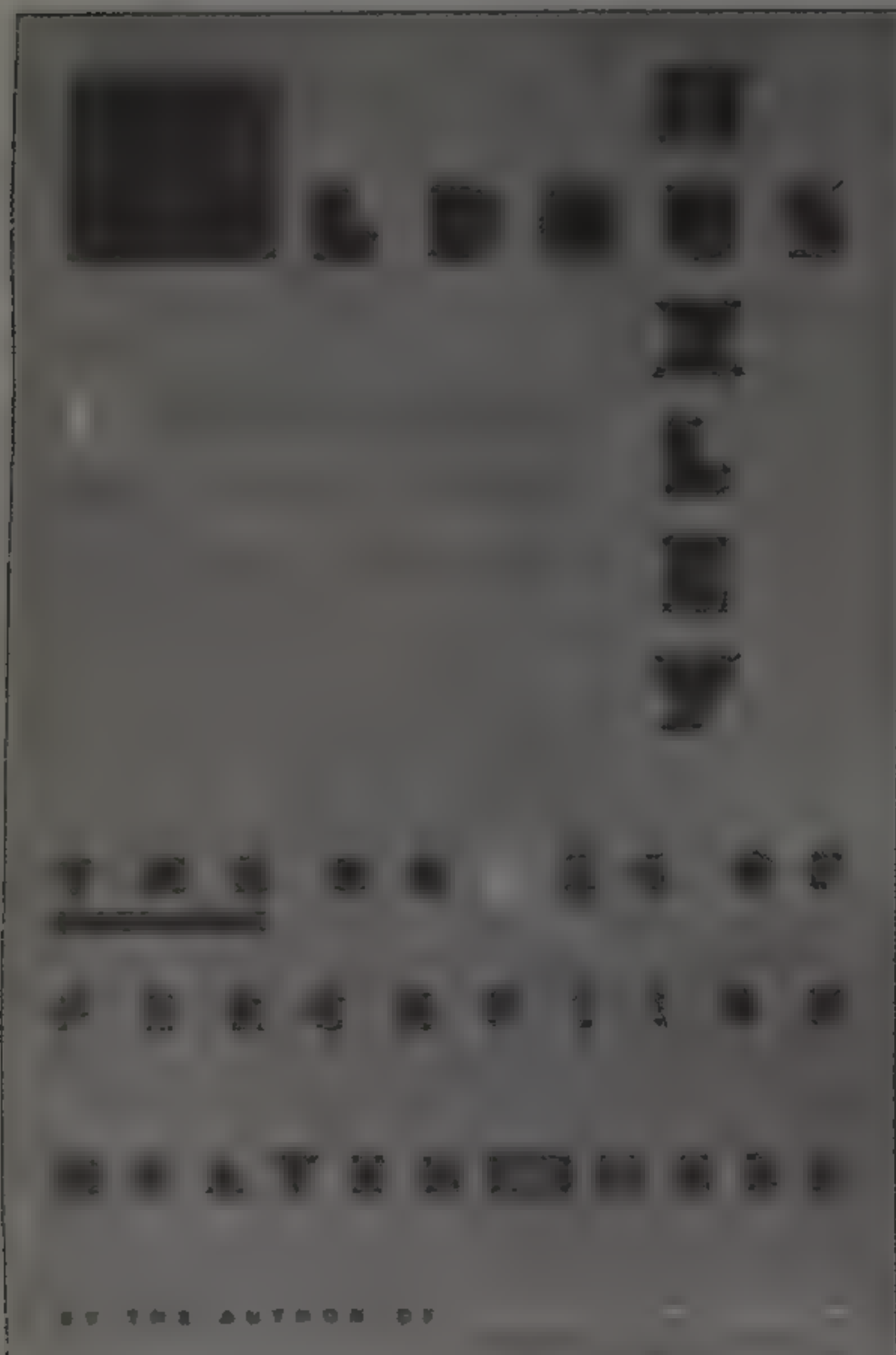
I'm certainly sympathetic to Huxley's essentially private rapture—the discoveries he's making seem to luxuriate fruitfully when unencumbered by the rules of conventional human interaction—but it should be noted that not only was it his first time using mescaline, he was also the only one using it. (I have no doubt he would've had a radically different response had he, for example, had sex while high—there are few experiences as potentially rich with a sense of shared wonder.)

For all Huxley's introspection, it nonetheless moves me that it's when he eventually hears vocal music that he reconnects with other people. Voices, he exclaims, became "a kind of bridge back

to the human world." He beautifully evokes that sometimes-difficult passage from interior to interactive states by falling in love all over again with music.

Huxley gets an incredible amount of mileage from this single venture into psychedelics, and in his posterior analysis, taking into account the dangers of drugs, he's able to convey a larger idea of how we are always going to be drawn toward methods of transcendence, though some methods seem more productive than others.

And in conclusion, Huxley thoughtfully imagines the ways in which agents like mescaline (or peyote or psilocybin) can grace one's overall sense of awareness: the user "will be wiser but less cocksure, happier but less self-satisfied, humbler in acknowledging his ignorance yet better equipped to understand the relationship of words to things, of systematic reasoning to the unfathomable Mystery which it tries, forever vainly, to comprehend." ▽



Doors of Perception is commonly attributed with having turned a lot of middle-aged intellectuals onto psychedelics back in the day, but I'm surely far from alone in crediting Huxley with prompting my own first tentative frisks of various substances in my late teens. While reckless abandon had its allure (see Keith Richards), I felt more aligned with Huxley's air of calm immersion, his heightened curiosity regarding what lies beneath life's mun-

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5. Peter Bjorn And John – Writers Block (almost gold)
6. Ruthier Foster – The Phenomenal (blue com)
7. Tom Waits – Orphans (anti)
8. Neil Young – Live At Massey Hall 1971 (reprise)
9. Lucinda Williams – West (lost highway)
10. !!! – Myth Takes (warp)
11. The Good The Bad & The Queen – The Good, The Bad & The Queen (parlophone)
12. Cara Luft – The Light Fantastic (blue case)
13. Antibalas – Security (anti)
14. Bill Boume – Boon Tang (cordova bay)
15. Rickie Lee Jones – The Sermon On Exposition Boulevard (new west)
16. You Say Party We Say Die – Lose All Time (paperbag)
17. LCD Soundsystem – Sound Of Silver (dfa)
18. Big Buisness – Here Come The Waterworks (hydra head)
19. Various – Endless Highway: The Music Of The Band (429)
20. Dying Fetus – War Of Attrition (relapse)
21. The Decemberists – The Crane Wife (capitol)
22. Mark Knopfler & Emmylou Harris – All The Roadrunning (mercury)
23. Of Montreal – Hissing Fauns, Are You The Destroyer (polyvinyl)
24. El-P – I'll Sleep When You're Dead (def jux)
25. Clutch – From Beale Street To Oblivion (drt)
26. Highwater Jug Band – S/T (hoodoo)
27. Geoff Berner – The Wedding Dance Of The Widow Bride (Jericho beach)
28. Apostle Of Hustle – National Anthem Of Nowhere (a&c)
29. Jann Hammond – Pain Comes To Show (back porch)
30. Explosions In The Sky – All Of A Sudden I Miss Everyone (tr)

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DANCE

GYPSY CARAVAN DANCE COMPANY (Tribute to Tribal) Royal Alberta Museum, 12845-102 Ave (420-1757) • Tribal style belly dance featuring Gypsy Caravan Dance Company, Vibe Tribe and others with music by Paul Bromley • Sat, Apr 14 (8pm) • \$18 at TIX on the Square

MAMOFODADAZ El Toro restaurant (619-8069) • Featuring dancers Micah and Kathy • Apr. 14 • \$12

MILK ZERO DANCE-WATER'S EDGE TransAlta Arts Barns, 10330-84 Ave (420-1757) • Featuring dancers, Gerry Morita and Theresa Dextrase with musicians Don Ross and James Carson and video by Tim Folkmann, with a different opening act each night • Apr. 13-15, 19-21 (8pm) • \$15 at TIX on the Square

ROYAL ALBERTA DANCE COMPANY Auditorium (451-8000) • Featuring local dancers including Tara Birtwhistle, Vanessa Lawson, Janet Sartore-De Luca and Darren Anderson • Apr. 12-13 • Tickets available at TicketMaster

GALLERIES/MUSEUMS

AGNES BUGERA GALLERY 12310 Jasper Ave (482-2854) • Open: Tue-Sat 10am-5pm • *GHOST LAKE*: Paintings by Gordon Harper • Until Apr. 5

ALBERTA CRAFT COUNCIL GALLERY 10186-106 St (488-6611) • Open Mon-Sat 10am-5pm (closed all hols) • **Feature Gallery:** *BREW-HAHA*: Fun and fabulous teapots and tea-sets; Apr. 7-July 14; Artist's reception: Sat, Apr. 14 (2-4pm) • **Discovery Gallery:** *SNOW SERIES*: Ceramics by Carole Epp; until Apr. 7 • *NEO-DVD*: Egg design by Neil Lazaruk; until Apr. 7 • *THE NAKED TRUTH*: Christopher Boha; Apr. 14-May 26; opening reception: Sat, Apr. 14 (2-4pm)

ART GALLERY OF ALBERTA Enterprise Square, 100, 10230 Jasper Ave • *CHINA SENSATION*: New Art from Chengdu; Apr. 14-June 10 • *FLAT*: An exhibition featuring artworks by nine Edmonton artists; Apr. 14-May 27 • *UNFLAT*: David Cantine; Apr. 14-June 10 • *ART OUTDOORS*: featuring the ten original works of art that are featured in the *Art Outdoors* billboards; Apr. 14-May 27 • **Talking with Artists**: David Cantine; Apr. 14 (1pm); talking with Artists Artists from *Flat*; Apr. 14 (2pm) • **All Day Saturday**: Art workshops, exhibition tours; Apr. 14 (2pm) • **Museum Builders Lecture Series**: Michael Palladino, M.A.D.E. lecture series; Apr. 18 (7pm); \$10/\$8 (AGA member/student)

ARTSHAB STUDIO GALLERY 10220-105 St (439-9532) • Open every Thu (5-8pm) • *CATFIGHT*: Six emerging artists investigate female-on-female aggression • *MORE NEW WORK*: Artworks by Artshab residents • Until Apr. 26

CENTRE D'ARTS VISUELS DE L'ALBERTA (461-3427) • Group show featuring members artworks, until Apr. 11 • *BETWEEN DREAM AND REALITY*: Artworks by Léonie Poole, Roma Newcombe, Pauline Ulliach, Monika Dery and Gisèle Grégoire; Apr. 13-25, opening reception: Apr. 13 (7-8 30pm)

CITY HALL Sir Winston Churchill Sq • *THE GREYING NATION PHOTOGRAPHIC EXHIBITION* Featuring photographs by Dr. Orest Semchishen and Dr. Mark Nowaczynski, curated by Gordon Snyder. Part of the The Greying Nation Conference • Until Apr. 7

DOUGLAS UDELL GALLERY 10332-124 St (488-4445) • Open, Tue-Sat 9 30-5 30pm • *LUX ETERNA*: Watercolour still lives by Vivian Thierfelder • Thu, Apr. 5 (5-7pm) • Apr. 5-21

ELECTRUM DESIGN STUDIO AND GALLERY 12419 Stony Plain Rd (482-1402) • Open: Tue by appointment, Wed-Fri 11am-5 30pm, Sat 11am 4pm, closed long weekends • *COLLECTION 2006*: New artworks by various artists

EVANGELICAL COVENANT CHURCH 8501-82 Ave • Annual Spring Show And Sale By The Emerging Artists' Society Of Alberta • Apr. 13 (5-9pm), includes reception, artists in attendance • Apr. 14 (10am-4pm)

EXTENSION CENTRE GALLERY 2nd Fl, University Extension Centre, 8303-112 St (492-0166) • Open Mon-Thu 8 30am-8pm; Fri 8 30am-430pm, Sat 9am-noon • *JAVA*: Hand-painted silk textiles inspired by Indonesia produced by the students in the Dept. of Human Ecology • Until Apr. 11

FAB GALLERY Rm 1-1 Fine Arts Bldg, 112 St, 89 Ave (492-2081) • Open: Tue-Fri 10am-5pm, Sat 2-5pm • *BACHELOR OF DESIGN GRAD SHOW* • Until Apr. 14 • Opening reception: Thu, Apr. 5 (7-10pm)

FRINGE GALLERY 10516 Whyte Ave (432-0240) • Open, Mon-Sat 9 30am-6pm • *TATTOO FLASH*: Artworks by Cornelia Ostzouts • Until Apr. 28 • Opening reewptions Sat, Apr. 14 (1-4pm)

GALLERY AT MILNER-STANLEY A. MILNER LIBRARY Main Fl, Sir Winston Churchill Sq (496-7030) • Open Mon-Fri 9am-9pm, Sat 9am-6pm, Sun 1-5pm • *SHOW OFF*: Exhibit of teen art • Until Apr. 30

HARCOURT HOUSE 10215 112 St (426-4180) • Open Mon-Fri 10am-5pm, Sat 12-4pm • *FAMILIAR TERRITORY*: Drawing installation by Lori Schickel; Apr. 5-May 12 • **Front Room:** *ROOTED IN*: Large scale charcoal drawings and small black and white line drawings of plant roots by Erin Schwab; Apr. 5-May 12 • Opening reception: Thu, Apr. 5 (7-10pm)

JEFF ALLEN GALLERY Strathcona Place, 10831 University Ave (433-5282) • Open Mon-Fri 9am-4pm • *ORIGINAL DIGITAL FINE ARTS*: Computer paintings by Ansgard Thomson • Until May 3 • Opening, Apr. 11 (6 30pm)

JOHNSON GALLERY (NORTH) 11817-80 St (479-8424) • Open Tue-Fri 9 30am-5 30pm; Sat 9 30am-4pm • Paintings by Raymond Chow; photos by Con Boland; serigraphs by Norval Morrisseau and George Weber; through April • **(SOUTH)** 7711-85 St (465-6171) • Open Mon-Fri 9am-5pm; Sat 10am-5pm • Serigraphs by George Weber, paintings by Don Sharpe, Teresa Stieben and Carol Hama Chang, pottery by Jim Speers and Helena Ball • Through April

LANDO GALLERY 11130-105 Ave (990-1161) • Featuring paintings by British artist Roger Colson • Until Apr. 5

LOFT GALLERY A.J. Ottewill Arts Centre, Red Barn, 590 Broadmoor Blvd, Sherwood Park (467-4481) • Open Sat 10am-4pm; Thu 5-9pm •

MCPAG 5411-51 St, Stony Plain (963-2777) • Open Mon-Sat 10am-4pm, Sun 10am-6 30pm • *LIFE LINES*: Filamenta group featuring artworks by Margo Fiddes, Dawna Dey Harnish, Sharon Willas Rubulak, Cathy Tomm, until Apr. 19

MINISTIK SCULPTURE STUDIO 37 Bristol Estates, 51049 Range Road 214, Sherwood Park (662-4160) • Sculptures by Horst D. open studio

MUSÉE HÉRITAGE MUSEUM 5 St. Anne Street, St. Albert Place, St. Albert (459-1528) • *A BRIGHTER FUTURE: THE GROWTH OF AGRICULTURE IN ST. ALBERT* • Until Apr. 8

MULTICULTURAL HERITAGE CENTRE 5411-51 St, Stony Plain (963-2777) • Open, daily 11 30am-4pm • *SASSY LADIES*: A display highlighting the "sassy" side of women including a revealing collection of intimates from the early years • Until May 28

NINA HAGGERTY CENTRE FOR THE ARTS Stollery Gallery, 9704-111 Ave (474-7611) • Open: Mon-Fri 10am-2pm; Tue/Thu evenings 6 30-8pm • *OBJECT OF THOUGHT*: Paintings by Walter Rosychuk • Until Apr. 13

PROFILES PUBLIC ART GALLERY 19 Perron Street, St. Albert (460-4310) • Open: Tue-Sat (10am-5pm), Thu (10am-8pm) • *FORM AND POTENTIAL*: Artworks by Pierre Bataillard, and Benjamin Oswald; until Apr. 7 • *SEEING FREE*: Artworks by James Doran, Monica Musselshite, Louis O' Coffey, Ulnke Rossier; Apr. 12-28, opening reception: Thu, Apr. 12 (7-9pm) • Drop-in Art for the Artist at Heart: Apr. 5

PROVINCIAL ARCHIVES OF ALBERTA 8555 Roper Rd (427-1750) • Open: Tue-Sat, Wed 9am-4 30pm • *THE GREAT WESTERN GARMENT COMPANY* Founded in 1911 and now owned by Lewis Strauss and Co. [Canada] Inc, the history of garment workers offers a glimpse of the history of all working people in this city. Exhibit features information panels, photographs and clothing • Until Apr. 27

SCOTT GALLERY 10411-124 St (488-3619) • Open Tue-Sat 10am-5pm • *LAS MENINAS*: Paintings by Leslie Poole; until Apr. 10 • *ELEMENTS*: Abstractions by Marianne Watchel; Apr. 14-May 1; opening reception: Sat, Apr. 14 (2-4pm), artist in attendance

SNAP GALLERY 10309-97 St (423-1492) • Open Tue-Sat 12-5pm • *ART OF THE ANKARA EX-LIBRIS SOCIETY*: Small printworks by artists of the Ankara Ex-libris Society of Turkey • Until Apr. 14

SPRUCE GROVE ART GALLERY 35-5 Ave, Spruce Grove (962-9664) • *WAX FACTOR: THE BEAUTY OF BATIK*: Artworks by Monika Dery • Until Apr. 21

TELUS WORLD OF SCIENCE 11211-142 St (452-9100/451-3344) • **Explorer Gallery:** *LEGO® Secrets of the Pharaohs* • Until May 6

TU GALLERY 10718-124 St (452-9664) • *RETROSPECTIVE*: Henry Schlosser: 30 years of fine furniture craftsmanship • Apr. 14-28 • Opening reception: Apr. 21 (1-4pm)

URBAN FOLKS SALON AND GALLERY behind Sapphires (438-7978) • *FREE PLAY*: Collaborations by local artists • *PERSONAL IMPRESSIONS*: Sculptures and reliefs • Through April

VAAA GALLERY 3rd Fl, Harcourt House, 10215-112 St (421-1731) • Open Mon-Fri 10am-4pm; Sat 12-4pm • *CON-STELLATION*: Artworks by Emanuelle Bara; *ROOTS*: Artworks by Teresa Halkow; until May 12; opening reception, artists in attendance: Thu, Apr. 5 (7-9 30pm)

WALTERDALE PLAYHOUSE Lobby, 10322-83 Ave (432-7357) • Art in the Lobby: Pen and ink drawings by Sharon Fitzsimmons, in conjunction with *Antony and Cleopatra* • Apr. 11 May 2, viewing one hour before curtain

WEST END GALLERY 12308 Jasper Ave (488-4892) • Paintings by Richard Cole

LITERARY

AUDREYS BOOKS 10702 Jasper Ave (423-3487) • Sasha White reading from her erotic novel *Lush*; Thu, Apr. 12 (7-30pm) • Launch of Jeff Buck's latest thriller, *Shell Game*, Tue, Apr. 17 (7pm) • Catherine Bush shares stories of a writer's life; Thu, apr 19 (7 30pm)

BLUE CHAIR CAFÉ 9624-78 Ave (469-8755) • Story Slam. An opportunity for writers to share their work, explore their talents and show off • Third Wed each month • \$5 (donation)

CITY ARTS CENTRE 10943-84 Ave (433-2932) • T.A.L.E.S. monthly Storytelling Circle: Tell stories or come to listen • Second Fri. of each month (8-10pm) until June • \$3 (first time free)

HULBERT'S CAFÉ 1601 115 St • Tru-O-Re-Rend Set • Open the 2nd Tue each month

KASBAR LOUNGE Basement of Yamas Taverna • Whyte Ave (914-8820) • *hepture*: Open stage play, the hepture band every Wed (open up 7 30, 8pm) until May 30

NAKED CYBER CAFÉ 10354 Jasper Ave • Music, and performance art open stage hosted by the Naked Eclectic Electric Orchestra • Every Thu (8pm)

THE PORTAL GALLERY 9414-91 St (702-7522) • Open Mon-Wed 12-5pm; Thu-Fri 12-8pm; Sat 12-7pm • Contemporary, figurative and landscape paintings • Through April

ROSIE'S BAR AND GRILL 10475-80 Ave (433-2991) • *Story Café: T.A.L.E.S.* • First Thu of ea month, through June (7-9pm) • Tricksters and Fools' with Denise M. Jennie Frost, and Billy Joe Laboucan • Thu, Apr. 5 (7-9pm) • \$5 cover

LIVE COMEDY

THE COMEDY FACTORY 3414 Gateway Boulevard (468-4999) • Thu (8 30pm), \$11; Fri (9 30pm), \$20, Sat (10 30pm), \$20 • Every Wed (8 30pm) Wacky Wednesday, \$5 • Brian Work; Apr. 5-7 • Boban; 12-14

THE COMIC STRIP 1646 Bourbon St, WEM, 8882-171 (483-5999) • Open nightly 8pm, Fri 8pm and 10 30pm 8pm and 10 30pm, Sun 8pm • Big Jay Oakerson, W Santos, and Daryl Mak; until Apr. 8; Hit or Miss M Mon, Apr. 9 • Final Round of Funniest Person with a Job Contest, Tue, Apr. 10 • Stephen Cox, Dawn Dun, Dan Brodribb, and Kelly Soloduka; Apr. 11-15

NEW CITY LIXWID LOUNGE • Comedy Night: The each month; no minors; 7pm (door), 9pm (show) •

RIVERSIDE BAR AND GRILL 367 St. Albert Rd (460-1111) • Wednesday Night Live: Open stage for comedy, at (7pm set-up/sound check, 8-10pm show)

YUK YUK'S KOMEDY KABARET Londonderry Mall (463-9857) • Open: Wed-Thu 8pm, Fri-Sat 8pm and 10 30pm • Sun; Industry Night: \$10 Wed Crash and Burn • Cash • Justin Schlegel, and Jon Steinberg; Apr. 5-7

THEATRE

ANTONY AND CLEOPATRA Walterdale Playhouse 1183 Ave (439-2845) • At the height of the greatest of history, one man has the power to rule the world, standing between him and his destiny is his queen named Cleopatra • Apr. 11-21 (8pm), Sun matinee (2pm) • \$12-\$16 at TIX on the Square

THE CHERRY ORCHARD Timms Centre for the Arts 1100 Campus (420-1757/492-2271) • Studio Theatre • By Anton Chekhov, translated by John Murrell, a heartbreaking, a classic • Until Apr. 7 (8pm); matinee: Thu, Apr. 12 (3 30pm) • \$8-\$20 at the Timms Centre box office one hour prior to the performance, advance at TIX on the Square

CLOSER AND CLOSER APART Romy Theatre, 10708 118 Ave (420-1757) • Theatre Network • By Eugene O'Neill, starring Julian Arnold, Jim DeFelice, and Caroline Lavin, Joe, a celebrated architect, can't remember things used to. His daughter and his son must decide how to deal with their sick father—a man too proud to confront his own • Apr. 17-18 (previews), Apr. 19-May 6

DIE-NASTY Varsoona Theatre, 10329-83 Ave (448-0695) • A hilarious, live, improvised soap opera • Every Wed, end of May • Tickets available at the door (7pm)

FLY BY NIGHT(S) • Firefly Theatre • Circus-Vaudrev an assortment of death-defying and laughter inducing tainment for TWO nights only • Apr. 13-14 (8pm) • \$20 TicketMaster, TIX on the Square

FORT MAC La Cité Francophone, 8627 rue Marie Anne Gaboury, 91 St (469-8400/420-1757) • Presented by L'UniThéâtre, by Marc Prescott, directed by Daniel Courty. A contemporary story, inspired by Albertan realities—newly wealthy people and social gaps arising from this site • Apr. 12-22, Thu-Sat (8pm) • \$23 (adult)/\$15 (student) on the Square, L'UniThéâtre, door

GRANNY CHRIST WHISPERS Theatre, 8882-170 Street, WEM (484-2424) • Apr. 6

IMAGEPALOOZA! Jekyll and Hyde Pub and Restaur 10610-100 Ave • Image Theatre • Local artists, poets and writers, and a wide variety of short plays, monologues and performance art • Apr. 5-7, 6 30pm (door show) • \$10 (door)

MAGGIE'S GETTING MARRIED Mayfield Dinner Theatre (1-800-661-9804) • A modern, adult comedy by Norm Macdonald • Until Apr. 15 • \$39-\$75

NO HOLDS BARD—VIVA LAS VERONA Shector (Cibola Citadel, 9828-101A Ave • Free Will Players • Funny money casino, silent auction, cash bar, music and entertainment—dress outrageously and prepare to have fun • Apr. 14 (7pm) • \$20 (adv) at TIX on the Square/\$20 (door)

THE OVERCOAT Citadel Shector Theatre, 9828-101A Ave (425-1820) • Based on the short story by Nikolai Gogol, stage play by Morris Panych and Wendy Goring, starring Peter Anderson • The Overcoat integrates physical theatre and the sweeping music of Shostakovich to tell a richly textured story of a man who acquires a beautiful new coat, only to lose it and his life • Through April • Theatre box office

TATTERCOATS Fringe Theatre For Young People, TransAlta Arts Barns Westbury Theatre, 10330-84 Ave (448-0000) • A traditional English tale produced by Multistory Theatre (England) about a young girl who lives with her grandfather in a small village in the north of England • 13-22, Sat-Sun mat (2pm), Fri night (7pm) • \$15 (adult)/\$12 (58 (student/senior)/\$10 (70 (child)

WHAT LIES BEFORE US Citadel Rice Theatre • Directed by Morris Panych • It's 1885, and two young men are searching for a place to live in the north of Canada's northern wilderness • Until Apr. 6 • \$15 (adult)/\$12 (child)

IT'S NOT HARMFUL TO SHARE A HIT OF DRUGS ON FILM, AND EVERYONE IS DOING IT

and attacking a pony-
 with power tools
 (1988). Rudy Ray Moore
 angel dust at the loopy
The Disco Godfather
 machine
 (1980). Richard E.

Where movies can take us with regards to drugs now is ambiguous. The subject has been explored from an impressive variety of angles in the last few decades, yet there are as many drug experiences as there are drug-takers, and those who take drugs, whether for transcendence or escape, don't seem to be diminishing in number. No doubt there will be new stories to tell, new revelations to share, and with any luck, some of them will still sound good after the high has worn off. ♡



looms over a number of drug films, but none so much as David Cronenberg's wildly inventive interpretation of Burroughs's most famous novel *Naked Lunch* (1991) hasn't a single recognizable drug in it, but, drawing upon Burroughs's biography as liberally as from his fiction, it conveys the most complex and harrowing closed circuit of addiction and eternal return in movies. Peter Weller is trapped in a cycle of sexual repression, schizophrenic disassociation, murder and dependency. The sense of unreality is beautifully heightened by the use of soundstages and the refusal to give any physical object a fixed appearance. And as the eloquently staged, chilling final sequence makes clear, the whole thing's really about the birth of an artist and the devastating price to be paid for one's muse.

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The Hoax pulls a fast one

JOSEF BRAUN / josef@vancouverweekly.com

Clifford Irving must have been a hell of a liar back in his prime, and talented liars usually possess the innate understanding that a really good lie is almost always half true.



Irving may have been, strictly speaking, shamelessly swindling the higher-ups at McGraw-Hill when he claimed to be selling them the greatest book of the 20th century, but he did in fact produce what must be considered one of its greatest hoaxes. Irving's fraudulent autobiography of eccentric billionaire recluse Howard Hughes was a stunt whose grandeur worked in exact tandem with its audacity, because its so often audacity itself that endows a lie with its seductive power.

Lasse Hallström's *The Hoax*, based on Irving's own book about his misadventures, is, perhaps inevitably, not as seductive as I imagine Irving must have been. Hallström, director of such middlebrow confections as *Chocolat* and *Casanova*, is certainly not a terribly audacious filmmaker. His overriding concern with pleasing the broadest possible audience tends to soften whatever edge his material might promise, and in the case of *The Hoax*, it also sucks a lot of the real fun out of boot.

Written by William Wheeler, *The Hoax* seems custom-fit to be the middle picture in a prestigious triple feature bookended by Orson Welles's *F for Fake*, which features Irving, and *The Aviator*, which recreates the life of Hughes, Irving's great subject.

But *The Hoax* has its inherent problems: it's a rousing, root-for-the-outlaw tale of true American crime, one that resonates effortlessly with the culture of celebrity mystique, but it's also saddled with ethical quandaries that thwart the film's ostensible family entertainment value. Thanks largely to its terrific cast, *The Hoax* is pretty good as a caper, but far less successful as a morality tale about the self-



COMEDY

OPENS FRI, APR 6
THE HOAX

DIRECTED BY LASSE HALLSTRÖM
WRITTEN BY WILLIAM WHEELER
STARRING RICHARD GERE, ALFRED MOLINA,
MARCIA GAY HARDEN, HOPE DAVIS

perpetuating power of lies.

IRVING IS PLAYED by Richard Gere, and, in contrast with his sombre, rather bland performances in movies like *Bee Season* or *Autumn in New York*, it's a treat to see him embody the equal parts exhilaration and desperation that accompany Irving's consummate con. Looking younger and livelier than he has in ages, Gere works that handsome poker face with sinister grace.

It's just too bad that Hallström has to blunt some of Gere's better moments with his impatient pacing and feel-good music cues: the high-five guitar opening of CCR's "Up Around the Bend" stomps all over Gere's performance more than once in a soundtrack annoyingly cluttered with golden oldies.

Alfred Molina plays Dick Susskind, a writer, researcher and Irving's mostly willing partner-in-crime, and though he's sometimes stuck in the

awkward role of Irving's conscience (which in reality is non-existent), his considerable comic talents aren't entirely wasted. Molina gets to turn up the tension repeatedly and entertainingly as the fumbling, nervous sidekick, and he even gets to be in Hallström's best sight gag: a shot of a sweaty Molina improvising his way out of perdition in the *Life Magazine* offices during an interrogation, while a giant framed photo of the Hindenburg crash hangs directly beside him.

Such moments pepper *The Hoax* and keep it highly watchable, as do the fine performances from Hope Davis as Irving's McGraw-Hill liaison and Marcia Gay Harden as Irving's exotic and lovable but suffering and gradually incriminated wife.

Once the charming devil meets his inevitable comeuppance there's basically nowhere left for this thing to go but at least the actors make Irving's tale a memorable ride into humiliation, infamy and, if Wheeler has his facts straight, even a sort of quiet, accidental heroism. According to Irving, he and Susskind's research into Hughes's presidential affiliations may have cracked Watergate before Woodward and Bernstein. But then, who the hell's going to believe the guy? ▽

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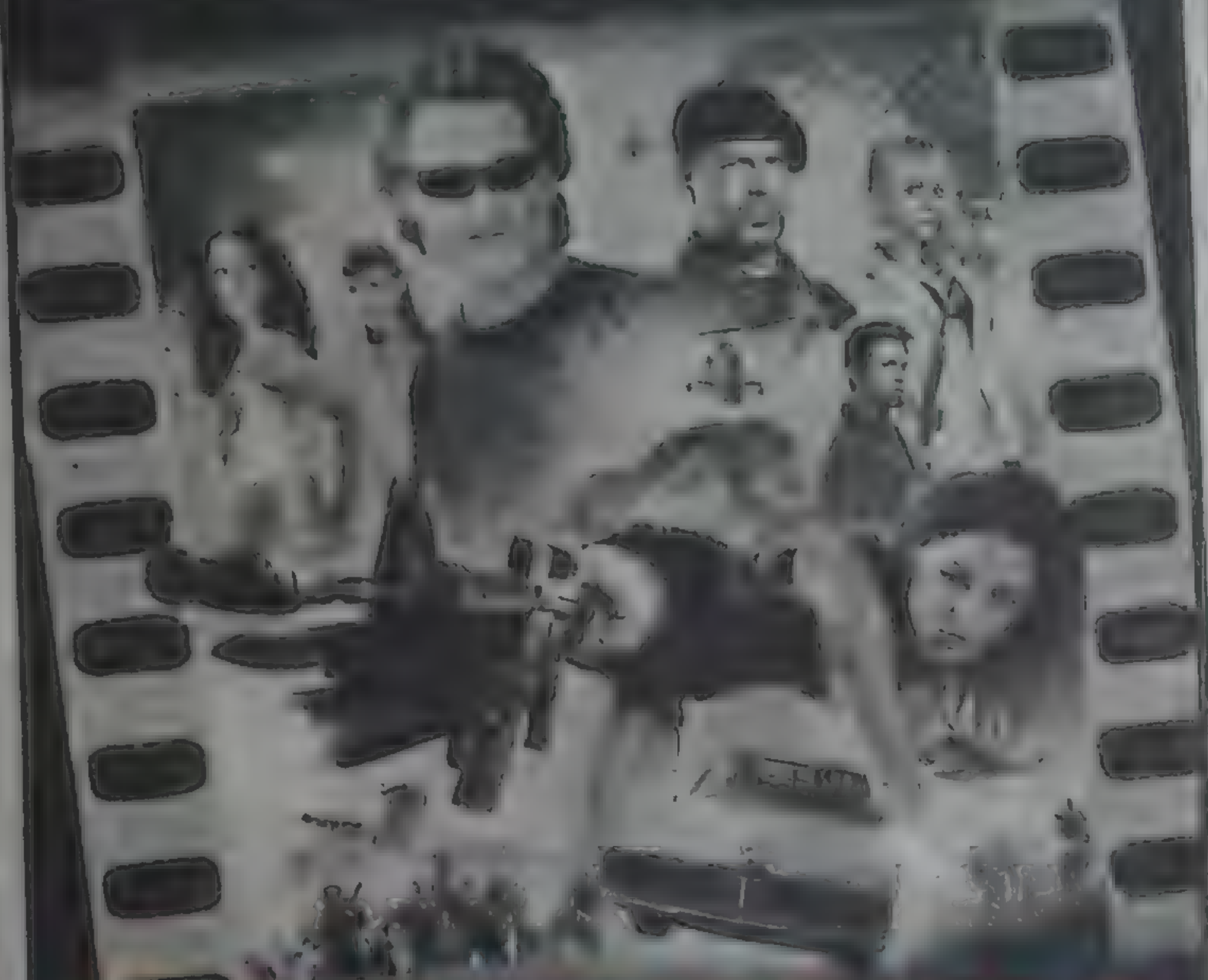
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Skip school, burn one down and see this movie (or movies)

ROBERT RODRIGUEZ / QUENTIN TARANTINO

Attending a press screening of a film is a bit of a dis-associating experience, if not for the mostly empty theatre and lack of popcorn and jujubes than because of the bizarre scheduling. For various deadline and logistical reasons, most big-budget Hollywood pictures are shown to reviewers early in the day in the middle of the workweek, and the experience of emerging from a darkened theatre into the midday sun tends to be a little mood-killing.

Even more so, I assumed as I arrived at the 9:30 am (yes, am) Tuesday morning advance showing of *Grindhouse*, the hotly anticipated double-feature from Robert Rodriguez and Quentin Tarantino, for a movie like this. Or, well, movies, that is: *Grindhouse* is comprised of two entirely separate—and surprisingly disparate in tone, pacing, style and quality—full-length features that pay homage to the down-and-dirty '70s exploitation films Tarantino and Rodriguez grew up on.

Gore, violence, excessive cursing and, of course, gratuitous T and A combine with scratchy film stock, bumpy audio, "missing" reels (used as a particularly effective gag in both features) and a generally seedy feel to effectively immerse the audience in the illusion of watching a bad '70s slasher flick (even if the characters in both films spend an annoying amount

HOMAGE

GRINDHOUSE

WRITTEN & DIRECTED BY ROBERT RODRIGUEZ, QUENTIN TARANTINO
STARRING ROSE MCGOWAN, MARLEY SHELTON, FREDDIE RODRIGUEZ, KURT RUSSELL, ZOE BELL, MICHAEL BIEHN

of screen time SMSing each other on their cellphones). A far cry from the university class I was missing that morning, to be sure.

First on the bill (after a "trailer" or two—more on that later—and some fantastic period-appropriate funk-out "Coming Attractions" and "Feature Presentation" reels that look as if they were rescued from a gritty New York cinema that was abandoned 30 years ago) is Rodriguez's *Planet Terror*, about a Texas backwater overrun by zombies after a virus (or something) is released from a nearby military base. The few townsfolk who have managed to escape infection or decapitation—including down-on-her-luck go-go dancer Cherry (Rose McGowan), her mysterious ex El Wray (Freddie Rodriguez) and his nemesis, the local sheriff (Michael Biehn)—form a ragtag group of deputized, gun-toting zombie killers desperate to save themselves from the brain-munching undead overrunning their town.

Despite some truly inspired gross-out gore, the odd reference to the War on Terror (perhaps meant as an allegory, but, if so, it's a little ham-handed), a spicy naughty-nurse



lesbian-lover cheatin' hearts subplot (seriously) and, without revealing too much, an amputated leg replaced by a machine gun (no, seriously), *Planet Terror* doesn't quite elevate itself above the level of loving but predictable—and, ultimately, forgettable—homage. Rodriguez apes George Romero a little too closely, perhaps, and while *Planet Terror* is a decent zombie movie, other recent flicks have done a better job of expanding upon (*28 Days Later*) or parodying (*Shawn of the Dead*) the genre than this.

BETWEEN THE TWO FEATURES is an eight-minute "intermission," but anyone leaving the theatre to stretch or pee will miss possibly the best part of *Grindhouse*. Along with more retro inter-titles and a truly disgusting commercial for a period fast food joint comes three more trailers for unmade (well, so far) exploitation films, courtesy of directors Rob Zombie, Eli Roth and Edgar Wright. I won't ruin the laughs, but I will say that I'm willing to start waiting in line now to see Zombie's Nazi monster movie *Werewolf Women of the SS*.

Undoubtedly the better of the two films, Tarantino's *Death Proof* is an unabashed take off on classic driving

movies like "*Dirty Mary Crazy Larry*" and "*Vanishing Point*," both of which are repeatedly name-checked, with the latter's iconic white Dodge Charger figuring prominently in the film's climax.

Instead of *Planet Terror*'s near-continuous onslaught of gore and violence, *Death Proof* spends its first half lulling the viewer with a group of stoner 20-something babes indulging in classic Tarantino shooting-the-shit, driving-around-town, smoking-weed-and-gettin'-drunk riffs, his best scenes of this kind since Travolta and Jackson riffed on "Royale with cheese" in *Pulp Fiction*.

The tension created by the arrival of Stuntman Mike (Kurt Russell, perhaps beginning a Travolta-like career rehabilitation) and his scary black "death proof" car ratchets itself up slowly, almost subconsciously, which makes it difficult to reveal too much of the set-up without ruining the truly chilling moment when Pam (McGowan again, this time as a blonde hippy chick)—and the audience—realizes that something is very, very wrong.

The only real knock on *Death Proof* is that it's, well, too good of a movie to really fit into the exploitation genre: the acting is a little too good, the dialogue is a little too natural, and the

extended climax—which is comprised entirely of one of the best car chase scenes in recent memory, accomplished entirely the "old fashioned" way with real cars and real stunts—is too crisp and professional for the old '70s exploitation flicks to which Tarantino is paying homage.

But after *Planet Terror*, which suffers from the opposite problem (sacrificing plot, acting, dialogue, et al to better serve the genre), *Death Proof* is a revelation, and is one of Tarantino's most genuinely enjoyable pictures.

One tiny problem with *Grindhouse* is its runtime. At three hours and 11 minutes, it's a bit of a slog—especially on a Tuesday morning. But as I lurched out of the dark of the matinee (or whatever it is you call a 9:30 am screening) into the searing lunch-time sun, it occurred to me that perhaps this was the best way to see a movie like this. I had, for the first time since the 10th grade, skipped school to hit the movies.

Besides, as I recall, when ditching class to take in a flick, the gorier and sexier and trashier that flick was, the better. And teenagers of Edmonton, if there was ever a movie worth missing second-period English for, *Grindhouse* is probably it. ▽

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In yet another reality series, *The Re-Inventors* spark up old ideas

GAVIN MEALING / gavin@vuweekly.com

Having a great idea for a new device or product seems to be a quality that is highly prized in contemporary society. Ingenuity is generally rewarded with buckets of adoration—as is the latest technological marvel that promises to deliver us from evil, turn the page in the history books and generally make the day-to-day a bit more palatable. That menu of wicked man-made munchies will continue to grow, thanks to producer Jamie Anderson's new show *The Re-Inventors*.

With the tagline "there's a fine line between genius and the absurd," special effects pro/history buff Jeremy MacPherson and backyard inventor Matt Hunter have taken it upon themselves to dig up old patents that never quite made it.

In an episode called gun helmet, the Re-Inventors unearth American inventor Albert Pratt's vision for a line of sight weapon to help soldiers with trench warfare in the First World War. Although the skull shooter looked obscenely awkward, MacPherson and Hunter manage to make the effort and create an interesting take on a piece of potentially weird weaponry.

The flying car episode sees the keen duo briefly gliding over the cultural context of the '50s, an era when "North Americans were confident of their future," before nose-diving into their recreation of Moulton Taylor's car with a 34-foot wingspan.

A snapshot of more recent projects includes the ufo-shaped Avro and an even more current (gasp) air car that has eight engines

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THE RE-INVENTORS
DIRECTED BY CHRIS TRIFFO
STARRING MATT HUNTER,
JEREMY MACPHERSON
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for vertical take-off and landing. I'm sure that the oil sands would be appropriately enthused to hear talk of a vehicle with eight healthy engines. Mmm ... emissions.

THE CRUSTY OLD IDEAS are combed over via narrator, which adds a suitable historical context. The vignettes take the shape of sped up pencil sketching—a visual break from Jeremy and Matt's high-fiving self-congratulatory ultimate challenges.

In two screening episodes, both of their skills were "put to the test big time." I didn't see any sweat. No curses over hammered thumbs equals good family watching. And with the spawn of a more than humanly watch-able number of reality shows, at least *The Re-Inventors* are coming up with something, uh, old.

Overall, the show seems to be part *MacGyver* and part *Home Improvement*. (Just dated myself there, guess it's been a while since my TV has functioned as something other than a cactus stand.)

Yet, I was left wondering—can you just go down to the patent office and adopt ideas that were left floundering? Hopefully, anyone can just try them out and wind up making another kick ass TV show out of Saskatchewan. Personally, I'm looking forward to the Helmet Parachute episode. ▼



Who killed Young Triffie? Why, its makers, of course

OMAR MOUALLEM / omar@vuweekly.com

What makes Canadian TV comedy distinct? Is it more caricature driven? Is it nationalistically self-deprecating? Is it more over-the-top, especially in contrast with popular subtleties like *The Office*? An even better question: does it translate to film?

Mary Walsh (*This Hour Has 22 Minutes*) called some of Canada's big names like Colin Mochrie, Rémy Girard and Fred Ewanuick for a movie she co-wrote and directed. Whether those names mean anything to you or not, it's time to blaze those torches because we're headed for Telefilm's office headquarters.

Young Triffie is so stereotypically Canadian that it feels like an ignorant outsider's work. Actually, it's not technically about Canada, it's about Newfoundland, 1947, before it was made provincial. It's like one of those Newfie jokes told in pubs, only it's not over until after last call.

Ranger Hepditch (Ewanuick) gets his first investigation after basic training. He's a screaming, squeamish, sheepish buffoon who often finds himself the target of pranks

COMEDY

OPENS FRI, APR 6
YOUNG TRIFFIE
DIRECTED BY MARY WALSH
WRITTEN BY WALSH, RAY GUY,
CHRISTIAN MINIHAN
STARRING ANDREA MARTIN, RÉMY GIRARD,
CATHY JONES, COLIN MOCHRIE, WALSH

We see these humiliations in black-and-white flashbacks about as relevant to plot as the non sequitur cutaways in *Family Guy*.

He's sent to Whitbourne to solve a rash of sheep mutilations. (If you think they're not going to use this to make sheep fucker jokes, you're wrong.) But the sheep take a backseat to the murder of young Triffie that occurs right before Hepditch arrives. His Sergeant (Mochrie) tries to replace him before the investigation is bungled, but Hepditch must stay put to show he's not the bee-otch everyone thinks he is.

Hepditch ruffles through many clues: the bruises on Triffie's body inflicted by her dad, a child-porn and pedophilia scandal, tortured orphans and an incestuous mystery. While this may work for some provocateurs like Todd Solondz, dark comedy is most effective with a

straight-face. Here, it is delivered with TV-land's slacked jaws painted on clown faces.

THERE IS SOME LAUGHTER in *Young Triffie* because if you roll dice enough times you will land a few double-sixes. Fans of *Royal Canadian Air Farce* might have better odds. But fans and non-fans will likely be stunned to see a naked 15-year-old girl's cadaver in a scene intended for laughter.

Triffie is like a Canadianized *Fargo* but without the enticing storyline and memorable performances. Triffie gets so lost in its clues that the solution comes and goes without any real catharsis, just a puzzled face of did-that-really-just-happen?

Telefilm's five-year plan to get four per cent of national box office tickets to go to Canadian films ended last year, and was somewhat of a success. Carrying over into 2007, movies like *Young Triffie* use familiar faces to cajole audiences. If they gross well, Telefilm can further fund real geniuses like Don McKellar and Mike Wilmot. So go ahead and buy a ticket for *Young Triffie* to support the cause (then walk into a theatre playing a better movie). ▼

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Ice kings are the sheen in *Blades*

JONATHAN BUSCH / jonathan@vuwweekly.com

While employed part-time a few years ago at a local photo lab, I had the privilege of developing David Pelletier and Jamie Salle's vacation photos. I was unnerved by the exhilarating lifestyle competitive figure skaters must lead. All those costumes, the bodily precision, the observant admiration of fans, and the like.



Silly boys Will Ferrell and Jon Heder

COMEDY

NOW PLAYING

BLADES OF GLORY

DIRECTED BY JOSH GORDON, WILL SPECK
WRITTEN BY JEFF COX, CRAIG COX, BUSY PHILIPPS
STARRING WILL FERRELL, JON HEDER, WILL ARNETT, AMY POEHLER

team up in *Blades of Glory* to make sense of men's figure skating. At several points, it startles in its laborious creativity.

Ferrell is Chazz Michael Michaels, a cock-rockin' dude on blades, head-to-head in frequent competition with young and pretty protégé Jimmy MacElroy (Heder). After a violent dispute following a gold medal tie, both skaters are banned from the sport; the single opportunity lies in competing with a partner, or better yet, as partners.

It's up to the boys to team up as the first male figure skating duo and stop the righteousness of their brother-sister competitors the Van Waldenbergs (Will Arnett and Amy Poehler), meanwhile stirring to the brim a pot of pop culture mockery and peepee gags.

The talent behind *Blades of Glory* (you know, the writers and directors) have pulled together a smooth production, despite the fact that the film has emerged from Hollywoodland in what seems like overnight. It's apparent every party involved is in overdrive mode, in a desperate attempt to complete the film for its early spring release. Ferrell's *Talladega Nights* and *Stranger Than Fiction* were released mid-2006, and he's on TV, like, all the time (do his kids ever get to see him?).

SURPRISINGLY, SUCH A BIG ship doesn't go tits up like one might expect. The most prevalent quality of televised figure skating of *Blades* is how quickly it roped me in; I needed a bathroom break in the first half hour, and I actually hurried back instead of enjoying my usual stroll around the lobby.

By far, the figure skating numbers are the most attractive. That's probably why the film begins with two lengthy performances by Chazz and Jimmy. Ferrell and Heder's bodies become captivating and expressive in sparkly tights. I'm quite serious; it's a very moving experience.

And yes, it's all very funny. Heder is still learning not to spit his words out like it's a highschool assembly, while Poehler has got to be one of the funniest perverted white women in her mid-30s (her role is even a little underwritten). Not surprisingly, Ferrell steals most of the laughs, and proves he's in peak comedic condition (aside from a surgical scar on his tummy I've never noticed before).

However, the story in between is barely solid enough to glue together the affective spectacle. There's a discovery of friendship, a star-crossed love story and the road to predictable success; it all rides backseat to the marvel of its performances and production design. Especially delightful is the Van Waldenberg's elegant home base, caught somewhere between Douglas Sirk and a theme room at the Fantasyland Hotel.

Sadly, though, besides all the gold medal tie jokes, Pelletier and Salle make no appearance. ▽

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GRINDHOUSE **APR 6 TO APR 11** Quentin Tarantino and *Sin City* director Robert Rodriguez team up for this violent escapade in retro carnage, starring *The Black Dahlia's* Rose McGowan and *Bohdy's* Freddy Rodriguez. Read Ross Moroz's review on page 40.

THE HOAX *Bee Season's* Richard Gere stars in director Lasse Hallström's dramatic comedy on fraud. Read Josef Braun's review on page 38.

YOUNG TRIFFIE Mary Walsh of *This Hour Has 22 Minutes* directs this comedic murder-mystery, starring Jennifer Adams and Doug Ballet. Read Omar Mouallem's review on page 41.

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BREACH (PG, coarse language) Sat-Sun 11:35; Daily 2:05, 4:30, 7:40, 10:05, Fri-Sat late show 12:20

LETTERS FROM IWO JIMA (14A, gory scenes) Daily 1:00, 4:00, 7:35, Fri-Sat late show 11:15

PAN'S LABYRINTH (14A, brutal violence, not suitable for children) Sat-Sun 11:25, Daily 2:00, 4:40, 7:10, 9:45; Fri-Sat late show 12:10

DREAMGIRLS (PG, coarse language, mature themes) Sat-Sun 10:50, Daily 1:20, 4:05, 6:50, 9:30, Fri-Sat late show 12:00

ARTHUR AND THE INVISIBLE (G) Sat-Sun 11:05; Daily 1:05, 3:10, 5:10, 7:30, 9:45; Fri-Sat late show 12:05

LAST KING OF SCOTLAND (18A, gory scenes) Sat-Sun 10:55; Daily 1:40, 4:10, 7:00, 9:35; Fri-Sat late show 12:00

THE QUEEN (PG) Sat-Sun 11:30, Daily 1:50, 4:20, 7:20, 10:00, Fri-Sat late show 12:15

NIGHT AT THE MUSEUM (PG, not recommended for young children) Sat-Sun 11:20, Daily 1:45, 4:25, 7:05, 9:50; Fri-Sat late show 12:20; Kids Kabin Fever: 1:45

BLOOD DIAMOND (14A, violence, disturbing content) Daily 1:15, 4:35, 7:50, Fri-Sat late show 11:25

THE PURSUIT OF HAPPYNESS (PG) Sat-Sun 11:10; Daily 1:35, 4:15, 6:55, 9:25, Fri-Sat late show 11:50

HAPPY FEET (G) Sat-Sun 11:15, Daily 1:30, 4:45, 7:15, 9:40, Fri-Sat late show 11:55

CHARLOTTE'S WEB (G) Sat-Sun 11:00, Daily 1:10, 3:15, 5:20, 7:25, 9:55, Fri-Sat late show 11:20

Movies 12: 130 Ave 50 St. 472-9779

BREACH (PG, coarse language) Sat-Sun 11:25; Daily 1:55, 4:50, 7:25, 10:00, Fri-Sat late show 12:15

DREAMGIRLS (PG, coarse language, mature themes) Sat-Sun 10:50; Daily 1:25, 4:05, 6:50, 9:30, Fri-Sat late show 11:55

LETTERS FROM IWO JIMA (14A, gory scenes) Daily 1:40, 4:45, 7:45, Fri-Sat late show 10:45

PAN'S LABYRINTH (14A, brutal violence, not suitable for children) Sat-Sun 11:10, Daily 1:35, 4:25, 7:10, 9:45; Fri-Sat late show 12:05

THE LAST KING OF SCOTLAND (18A, gory scenes) Sat-Sun 10:55; Daily 1:20, 4:15, 6:55, 9:35, Fri-Sat late show 11:55

ARTHUR AND THE INVISIBLE (G) Sat-Sun 11:05; Daily 1:05, 3:10, 5:10, 7:30, 9:45; Fri-Sat late show 12:05

NIGHT AT THE MUSEUM (PG, not recommended for young children) Sat-Sun 11:20, Daily 1:45, 4:25, 7:05, 9:50; Fri-Sat late show 12:00; Kids Kabin Fever: 1:45

BLOOD DIAMOND (14A, violence, disturbing content) Daily 1:15, 4:35, 7:40, 10:40

THE PURSUIT OF HAPPYNESS (PG) Sat-Sun 11:10; Daily 1:35, 4:15, 6:55, 9:25, Fri-Sat late show 11:50

HAPPY FEET (G) Sat-Sun 11:15, Daily 1:30, 4:45, 7:15, 9:40, Fri-Sat late show 11:55

CHARLOTTE'S WEB (G) Sat-Sun 11:00, Daily 1:10, 3:15, 5:20, 7:25, 9:55, Fri-Sat late show 11:20

STOMP THE YARD (PG, coarse language)

Daily 7:25, 9:50; Fri-Sat late show 12:10

CHARLOTTE'S WEB (G) Sat-Sun 11:00; Daily 1:10, 3:15, 5:15, 7:30, 9:40, Fri-Sat late show 11:20

CITY CENTRE 9

1000-182 Ave. 472-1000

GRINDHOUSE (18A, gory scenes, brutal scenes) Daily 12:30, 4:25, 8:30

BLADES OF GLORY (PG, crude content, not recommended for young children) Daily 1:10, 4:05, 7:30, 9:50

THE HOAX (14A, coarse language) Daily 1:00, 4:00, 7:00, 10:00

300 (18A, gory scenes) Daily 12:40, 3:20, 6:00, 8:40

REIGN OVER ME (14A, mature theme, coarse language) Fri-Sun-Wed 12:45, 3:25, 7:10, 10:00; Sat 7:10, 10:00; Thu 12:45, 3:25, 7:10

THE LOOKOUT (14A, coarse language) Daily 1:30, 4:15, 7:20

THE HOST (14A, frightening scenes, violence subtitled) Daily 9:40

THE REAPING (14A, frightening scenes) Daily 1:20, 4:05, 7:30, 9:50

SHOOTER (18A) Daily 12:50, 3:30, 7:15, 9:45

THE NAMESAKE (PG) Daily 12:55, 3:35, 6:15, 9:00

THE POLITICAL OPERA: EUGENE ONE-GIN ENCORE PRESENTATION (Classification not available) Sat 11:30am

CLAREVIEW

4211 130 Ave. 472-1000

SHOOTER (18A) Fri-Sun 1:10, 4:00, 6:40, 9:30, Mon-Thu 4:00, 6:40, 9:30

THE REAPING (14A, frightening scenes) Fri-Sun 1:20, 4:10, 7:40, 10:00, Mon-Thu 4:10, 7:40, 10:00

WILD HOGS (PG, coarse language, not recommended for young children) Fri-Sun 1:40, 4:20, 7:15, 9:55, Mon-Thu 4:20, 7:15, 9:55

FIREHOUSE DOG (PG) Fri-Sun 1:50, 4:15, 6:45, 9:10, Mon-Thu 4:15, 6:45, 9:10

ARE WE DONE YET? (G) Fri-Sun 2:00, 4:35, 7:30, 10:00, Mon-Thu 4:35, 7:30, 10:00

TMNT (PG) Fri-Sun 12:30, 3:10, 6:30, 9:00, Mon-Thu 3:10, 6:30, 9:00

BLADES OF GLORY (PG, crude content, not recommended for young children) Fri-Sun 1:30, 3:50, 7:20, 9:40, Mon-Thu 3:50, 7:20, 9:40

MEET THE ROBINSONS (G) Fri-Sun 1:00, 3:30, 7:00, 9:20, Mon-Thu 3:30, 7:00, 9:20

GRINDHOUSE (18A, gory scenes, brutal scenes) Fri-Sun 12:40, 4:30, 8:30, Mon-Thu 4:30, 8:30

300 (18A, gory scenes) Fri-Sun 12:50, 3:40, 6:50, 9:50, Mon-Thu 3:40, 6:50, 9:50

GALAXY-SHERWOOD PARK

2020 Sherwood Drive, 418-0150

GRINDHOUSE (18A, gory scenes, brutal scenes, no passes) Fri-Mon 1:00, 5:00, 9:00, Tue-Thu 7:45

FIREHOUSE DOG (PG, no passes) Fri-Mon 1:10, 5:10, 9:10, Tue-Thu 7:55

THE REAPING (14A, frightening scenes) Fri-Sun 1:20, 4:10, 7:40, 10:00, Mon-Thu 4:10, 7:40, 10:00

ARE WE DONE YET? (G) Fri-Mon 1:05, 4:00, 7:00, 10:00, Tue-Thu 4:00, 7:00, 10:00

BLADES OF GLORY (PG, crude content, not recommended for young children) Daily 12:30, 3:30, 6:45, 9:15, Tue-Thu 6:45, 9:15

MEET THE ROBINSONS (G) Fri-Mon 1:30, 4:30, 7:30, 10:30, Tue-Thu 4:30, 7:30, 10:30

WILD HOGS (PG, coarse language, not recommended for young children) Fri-Mon 12:50, 3:50, 6:50, 9:50, Tue-Thu 3:50, 6:50, 9:50

REIGN OVER ME (14A, mature theme, coarse language) Daily 9:20

GARNEAU

8712 130 Ave. 472-1000

THE WIND THAT SHAKES THE BARLEY (14A, violence, coarse language) Daily 6:50, 9:10, Sat-Sun 2:00

GATEWAY 8

2950 Calgary Trail, 436-6977

ZODIAC (14A, violence) Fri-Sun 1:00, 4:30, 8:30; Mon-Thu 8:30

THE REAPING (14A, frightening scenes) Fri-Sun 1:20, 4:00, 7:05, 9:40, Mon-Thu 7:05, 9:40

THE HOST (14A, frightening scenes, violence subtitled) Fri-Sun 1:05, 3:55, 6:45, 9:30, Mon-Thu 6:45, 9:30

MUSIC AND LYRICS (PG) Fri-Sun 1:15, 3:50, 7:10, Mon-Thu 7:10

GHOST RIDER (14A) Daily 9:35

BRIDGE TO TERABITHIA (PG, may frighten young children) Fri-Sun 1:30, 3:45, 7:00, Mon-Thu 7:00

DEAD SILENCE (14A, frightening scenes) Daily 9:20

NAMASTEY LONDON (STC, subtitled) Fri-Sun 3:30, 6:30, 8:45, Mon-Thu 6:30, 8:45

THE LOOKOUT (14A, coarse language) Fri-Sun 1:40, 4:10, 7:20, 9:50, Mon-Thu 7:20, 9:50

THE HILLS HAVE EYES 2 (18A, brutal violence, gory scenes) Fri-Sun 1:50, 4:20, 7:30, 10:00

GRANDIN THEATRE

Grandin Mall, 500 Winston Churchill Ave. 498-7070

ARE WE DONE YET? (G) Daily 1:10, 3:15, 5:20, 7:25, 9:35

FIREHOUSE DOG (PG) Daily 12:55, 3:55, 6:55, 9:55, Stars and Strollers screening, Tue 1:00

BLADES OF GLORY (PG, crude content, not recommended for young children) Daily 1:30, 3:25, 5:20, 7:25, 9:25

TEENAGE MUTANT NINJA TURTLES (PG) Daily 1:35, 3:20, 5:15, 7:15

300 (18A, gory scenes) Daily 9:00

MEET THE ROBINSONS (G) Daily 1:15, 3:30, 5:30, 7:30, 9:20

LEDUC CINEMAS

4762-50 St. Leduc, 988-2728

BLADES OF GLORY (PG, crude content, not suitable for young children) Daily 6:55, 9:15, Fri-Mon 12:55, 3:15

GRINDHOUSE (18A, gory scenes, brutal scenes) Daily 7:20, Fri-Mon 1:30

TEENAGE MUTANT NINJA TURTLES (PG) Fri-Mon 1:10, 3:10

THE REAPING (14A, frightening scenes) Daily 1:20, 4:10, 7:40, 10:00

MEET THE ROBINSONS (G) Daily 7:00, 9:10, Fri-Mon 1:00, 3:25

MAGIC LANTERN-CAMROSE

Camrose, 780-608-2144

GRINDHOUSE (18A, gory scenes, brutal violence) Daily 7:30; Sat-Sun, Mon 1:50

BLADES OF GLORY (PG, crude content, not recommended for young children) Daily 7:00, 9:10, Sat-Sun, Mon 2:05

ARE WE DONE YET? (G) Daily 7:05, 9:15, Sat-Sun, Mon 2:10

WILD HOGS (PG, coarse language, not recommended for young children) Daily 6:55, 9:05, Sat-Sun, Mon 2:15

MEET THE ROBINSONS (G) Daily 6:50, 9:00, Sat-Sun, Mon 1:55

MAGIC LANTERN-SPRUCE GROVE

205 Main St. Spruce Grove, 972-2332

MEET THE ROBINSONS (G) Daily 7:00, 9:00, Fri-Mon 1:00, 3:00

GHOST RIDER (14A) Night Owl Show, Apr 5, 7:25, 10:00, Tue-Thu 7:25, 10:00

WILD HOGS (PG, coarse language, not recommended for young children) Fri-Mon 12:50, 3:50, 6:50, 9:50, Tue-Thu 3:50, 6:50, 9:50

REIGN OVER ME (14A, mature theme, coarse language) Daily 9:20

METRO CINEMA

9828-101A Ave. Citadel Theatre, 472-1000

INTO GREAT SILENCE (STC) Fri-Sat-Sun Mon 7:00

48 HOUR FILM FEST (STC) Tue 6:30

STEM CELL FILM FEST (STC) Thu 7:00

STEM: THE FACE OF EVERYTHING (STC) Thu 7:00

NEW WEST MALL 8

8822-101 Ave. 444-1800

THE ASTRONAUT FARMER (PG) Fri-Mon 1:10, 4:15, 6:40, 9:25, Tue-Thu 6:40, 9:25

PAN'S LABYRINTH (14A, brutal violence, not recommended for children, subtitled) Fri-Mon 12:30, 3:20, 6:45, 9:30; Tue-Thu 8:45, 9:30

BREACH (PG, coarse language) Fri-Mon 12:50, 3:15, 7:00, 9:20, Tue-Thu 7:00, 9:20

DREAMGIRLS (PG, coarse language, mature themes) Fri-Mon 1:00, 4:00, 6:50, 9:40; Tue-Thu 6:50, 9:40

EPIC MOVIE (14A) Fri-Mon 12:45, 2:45, 4:45, 7:15, 9:35, Tue-Thu 7:15, 9:35

THE MESSENGERS (14A, frightening scenes) Fri-Mon 1:20, 4:20, 7:20, 10:00, Tue-Thu 7:20, 10:00

NIGHT AT THE MUSEUM (PG, not recommended for young children) Fri-Mon 1:30, 4:30, 7:10, 9:50, Tue-Thu 7:10, 9:50

INTO GREAT SILENCE (STC) violence, disturbing content) Daily 6:30, 9:30

HAPPY FEET (G) Fri-Mon 12:40, 3:30

NORTH EDMONTON CINEMAS

14231 137th Avenue, 732-2223

GRINDHOUSE (18A, gory scenes, brutal scenes, no passes) Daily 1:30, 5:30, 9:30

THE REAPING (14A, frightening scenes) Daily 1:20, 5:10, 7:50, 10:10

FIREHOUSE DOG (PG) Daily 1:15, 4:05, 6:40, 9:10

ARE WE DONE YET? (G) Fri-Mon-Wed-Thu 12:20, 2:40, 5:00, 7:20, 9:50, Tue 5:00, 7:20, 9:50, Stars and Strollers screening, Tue 1:00

BLADES OF GLORY (PG, crude content, not recommended for young children) Daily 12:30, 1:50, 3:00, 4:10, 5:20, 6:50, 8:00, 9:20, 10:30

MEET THE ROBINSONS (G) Daily 12:00, 2:20, 4:40, 7:00, 9:45

THE LOOKOUT (14A, coarse language) Daily 1:20, 3:50, 7:10, 10:00

TMNT (PG) Daily 12:10, 2:15, 4:30, 6:45, 8:50

SHOOTER (18A) Daily 1:10, 4:00, 7:30, 10:20

REIGN OVER ME (14A, mature theme, coarse language) Fri-Mon-Thu 12:40, 3:40, 6:55, 9:55, Tue 3:40, 6:55, 9:55, Wed 12:40, 3:40, 9:55, Stars and Strollers, Tue 1:00

PREMONITION (PG, frightening scenes, not recommended for young children) Fri-Sun-Thu 1:00, 3:30, 6:30, 8:45, Sat 3:30, 6:30, 8:45

300 (18A, gory scenes) Daily 1:40, 4:20, 7:40, 10:20

WILD HOGS (PG, coarse language, not recommended for young children) Daily 2:00, 4:50, 7:15, 9:40

METROPOLITAN OPERA, EUGENE ONE-GIN ENCORE PRESENTATION (STC) Sat 11:40

PRINCESS

10337-82 Ave. 432-0728

SHARKWATER (14A, disturbing content) Daily 12:00, 2:00, 4:00, 6:00, 8:00, 10:00

THE LIVES OF OTHERS (14A) Daily 6:50, 9:20; Fri-Sun 2:00

SILVERCITY WLM

WEM, 888-2170 St. Albans

BLADES OF GLORY (

Jeremy Fisher keeps on smokin'

DAVID BERRY / david@vuweekly.com

You wouldn't expect **Jeremy Fisher** to stir up much in the way of controversy. This isn't to suggest that the guy's pure vanilla or anything, but as far as divisive figures go, mild-mannered singer-songwriters with a taste for bright-eyed acousti-pop don't usually rank all that high—probably somewhere between pizza delivery people and second cousins. Tell that to YouTube, though.

The Halifax-born, Vancouver-based Fisher recently put together a shoe-string, shot-by-his-lonesome, stop-motion video for "Cigarette," the first single off his newest album, *Goodbye Blue Monday*. It's a jaunty, herky-jerky little affair in which a lovelorn cigarette wanders through an apartment attempting to fit in with its inhabitants, ultimately finding true love with a match, all set to Fisher's fairly innocuous lyrics about how he wants to be your cigarette: light him up, he'll be your habit, that sort of thing. Sweet and fun, and also fairly popular, boasting a feature on the main page and more than 1.25 million views to date.

Some combination of overblown and misguided anti-smoking sentiment and internet forum trolldom, though, has also sparked a fairly vicious reaction. Almost 2 000 comments debating the merits of cigarette smoking, as a matter of fact, as well as a few roundly hilarious response videos taking Fisher to task for promoting something that kills mothers and fathers around the world, you prick.

FOR A GUY WHO WAS just trying to promote his album with a new trick he'd learned, it's been a bit overwhelming.

"I was fairly surprised by the whole thing, but I can't really argue with it: I think I get twice the views I would have just because people wanted to argue about it," says Fisher, who



PREVUE

THU, APR 12 (8 PM)
JEREMY FISHER
WITH TOMI SWICK, SIMON WILCOX
STARLITE ROOM, \$18

admits he'd never even considered people might think he was advocating cigarettes one way or the other. "I've never even been a smoker—I had to ask a friend of mine what it was like. I was just sort of trying to use what meagre literary devices I could to write a good song. It's just kind of a metaphor, you know, and I also liked the way 'cigarette,' 'forget' and 'habit' strung together in the chorus.

"I think that with any kind of online

forum, though, people are just looking for a way to get upset sometimes," continues Fisher, who does say he's happy with the positive responses, of which there have been many. Still though, there's just something about unbelievably irrational anonymous internet folk that has a way of getting your sigh up. "I think I probably could have put a kitten up there, and people would have gotten their hackles up about me holding the kitten the wrong way. I was actually fairly glad when someone said I got paid to do an anti-smoking ad, which isn't true but it seemed to sort of quiet some people down." ▼



PREVUE/ THU, APRIL 5 (4:30 PM) / TASTE OF CHAOS / SHAW CONFERENCE CENTRE, \$39.50 (ALL AGES) Musical tactician and grand battle organizer Kevin Lyman—the successful Warped Tour planner—is widening the fray with the fourth annual Taste of Chaos Tour. Metal, punk and emo bands like the Used, 30 Seconds to Mars, Senses Fail, Saosin, Chiodos, Aiden and Evaline will all hack their way into the multi-band event. The event promises sonic screamo and moshpits aplenty, and up and comers that have proven their mettle in the Ernie Ball International Battle of the Bands will also get their chance to shine in the hardcore mayhem.

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Between rock 'n' roll and hard drugs

EDEN MUNIRO / eden@vuwweekly.com

Fucking rock 'n' roll and drugs go hand in hand, period," states Hugh Dillon—current leader of the Hugh Dillon Redemption Choir and former singer for the Headstones—matter-of-factly over the phone from his home in Los Angeles. "I hate sounding like an old man, because if somebody told me, 'well, you shouldn't ...'—fuck it, I loved it. At the time, rock 'n' roll worked with drugs."

It's true that rock 'n' roll has a long and sordid past that is intertwined with the use of intoxicating substances—just look at Guns N' Roses or the Rolling Stones or even Elvis Presley—and there are plenty of great rock 'n' roll albums that were created under the influence of all manner of illicit substances.

But it's not like those records came together when a band said "hey, let's shoot some smack and then write a masterpiece." No, like Dillon says, the two things just go together, mainly because when a band starts out, music isn't a full-time gig—and for many groups, it never is. It's just a way to escape the realities of the work- or school-week, much like friends getting together on the weekend for a few drinks down at the pub.

Dillon admits that drugs and alcohol served as a social lubricant during the early days of the Headstones, helping the creative process along

MUSIC UNDER THE INFLUENCE

and reducing the nervousness of youth, but he also says that the lifestyle ultimately catches up and dilutes the creative process.

Even with the best bands—the ones who manage to put out a solid streak of great albums in a row—there tends to be a sudden and sharp downswing in quality. Then there are those who manage only an album or two of Grade A material before they are tapped out nearly from the start. Dillon points out that the variables involved in sustaining such a lifestyle are ultimately too much to handle for most.

"It's a double-edged sword," he says. "It can help you, but it can also fuck you. It's one of those luck-of-the-draw kind of things—you don't know where it's going to land."

THINGS BEGAN to get infinitely more complicated for Dillon once the Headstones signed a record deal and began recording and touring full-time, taking away that weekend-warrior vibe that originally kept them grounded and sober. Looking back now, Dillon has no illusions about the possibility of remaining creative while continuing prolonged use of mind-

altering substances

"You can't," he says with the finality of someone who tried to do so for as long as possible, only to learn the truth of the matter the hard way. "There's just no fucking way. Even when I was on the road I heard other people say it Bonnie Raitt or somebody said, 'lots of people can drink a shitload of Jack Daniel's and have one or two records, but that's as far as you can go because you cannot sustain it.'"

The singer has gone considerably farther, currently readying the second

album from the Hugh Dillon Redemption Choir for a June release, and he's quick to point out that the days of social lubrication have now been left far behind. He explains that the combination of age and sobriety has made it easier than ever before to be creative because he's no longer weighed down by any self-doubt about his abilities as a songwriter—though he concedes that it took a long time for him to get to this point

It's one of those luck-of-the-draw kind of things—you don't know where it's going to land

ing—in itself is a fucking buzz. And people like me—because I like every drug and every drink—just use drugs and alcohol to enhance that initial fucking rush of great writing, and then you're always just trying to recreate it. That's why you start off with 'I had six drinks and smoked three joints that time we wrote that one song, so this'll rock.' It's constantly looking for that combination, and that's the elusive part of it."

SINCE THE DEMISE of the Headstones, Dillon has thrown himself into his work with renewed dedication, living a double life as a musician and an actor. In addition to the upcoming

"That's why I say rock 'n' roll invented drugs," he continues, "because rock 'n' roll—and songwrit-

album, he's also preparing for the premiere of *Durham County*, a six-part series premiering in May on Movie Central, in which he plays the lead role. He's particularly adamant regarding the possibility of maintaining his current career path in conjunction with drugs and alcohol

"No way," he says. "No way. No way. Fuck. It's a business and you can't show up thinking you're king shit and fucking smoking a little dope and drunk. You know what a thing's like? You study for a test, you learn all the dialogue and then you've got to go the next day, go word-for-word! and nail your test and they put a camera on you really close up and you can't make any mistakes."

Hard work, no doubt, but Dillon says it's worth it, likening the rush of nailing an acting role with the feeling he gets from music, pausing for a moment before continuing

"That's why you can't be really great at music with the drugs, because you've got to rehearse the fuck out of it so you play it right without even thinking about your lyrics, so you know that song inside out," he reflects. "I was retarded because I thought I was smarter than everybody else so I could drink and do drugs at the same time, but all it did was make me have to rehearse twice as long and twice as hard. Like I said, it's a double-edged sword: it can get you in places, but it can be hard to get out." ▽

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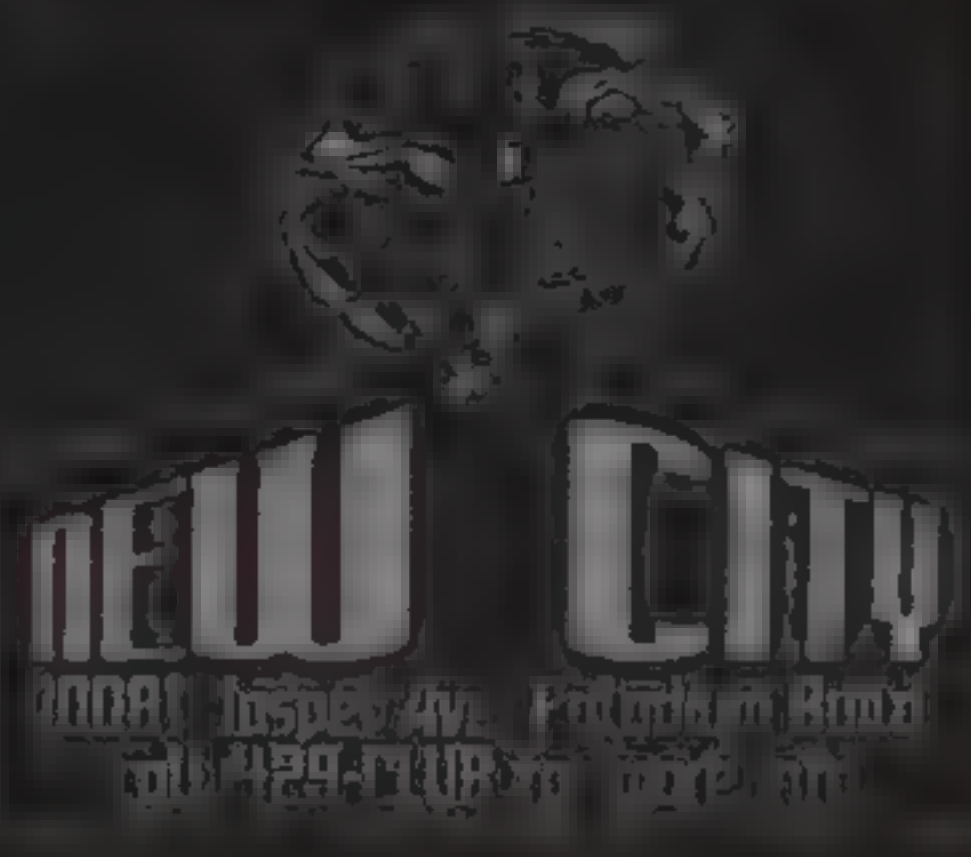
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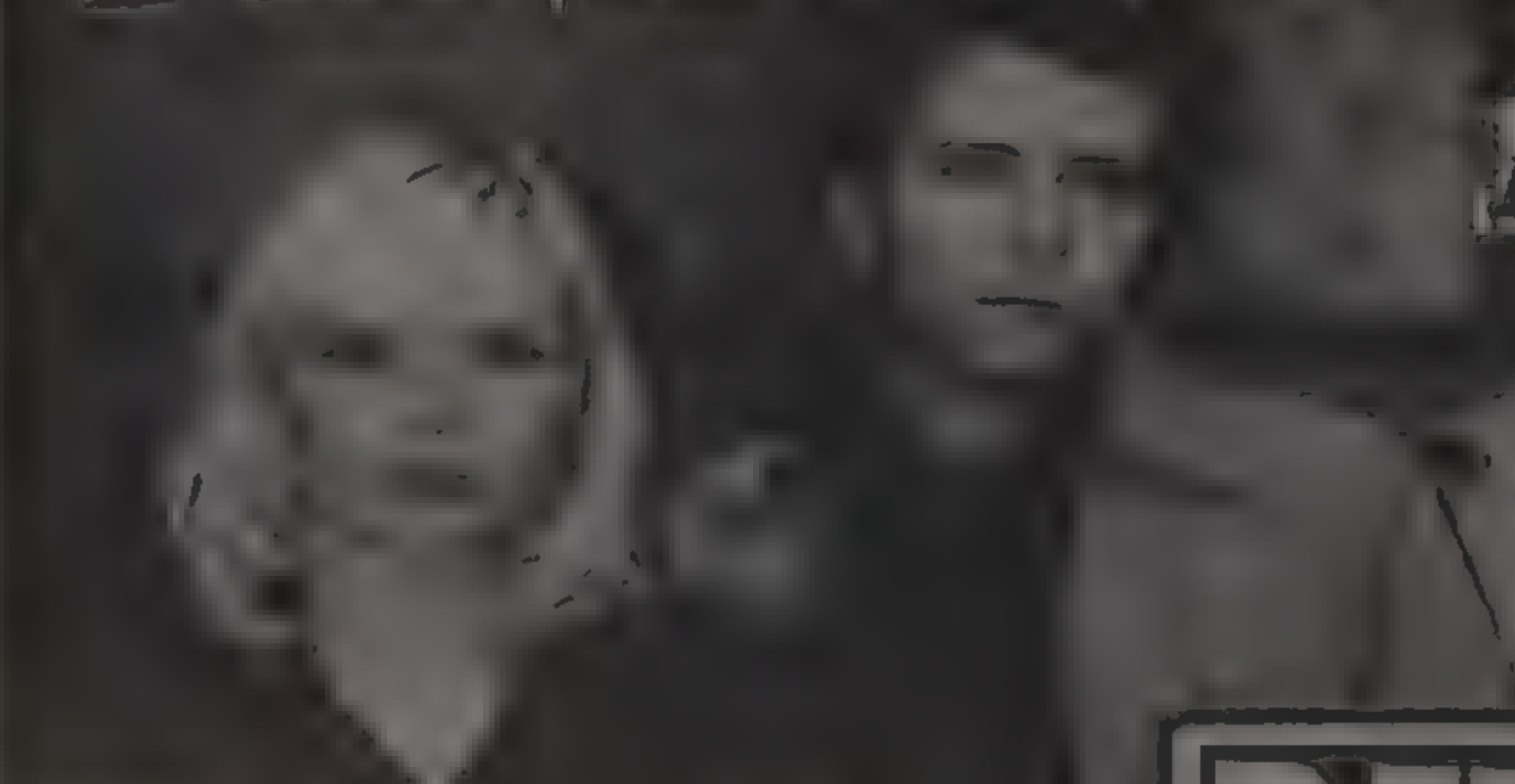
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The Yukon's Kim Barlow is no *Champ*

AM BIRTLES / bryan@vuweekly.com

Some artists have friends in high places. When I reached Kim Barlow, she had just stepped off of a plane from Ottawa, where she had been hobnobbing with some of Canada's cultural elite for a celebration of the 50th anniversary of Canada Council grants.

"I was in Ottawa hanging out at the Governor General's house," she says, kiddingly nonchalant. "They chose 50 artists from across the country who have received Canada Council grants. There were some great artists at the gathering—it was just mind blowing to be included in that group."

But hanging out with Michaëlle Jean is not how Barlow tends to spend her time. Instead, she can usually be found in the company of her young son at their home in the Yukon. Although living in the north may seem an odd choice for anyone—especially if, like Barlow, they were raised in Nova Scotia and went to university in sunny Florida—she explains that there is something about the Yukon that pulls a certain type of person there.

"The Yukon has the highest per capita rate of artists in the country," she says. "For people like me, it's because we were drawn there—artists can sometimes be solitary types."

BARLOW WRITES intensely personal songs about issues of the heart, her northern home and her son. Trained



PREVIEW

THU, APR 12 (8 PM)
KIM BARLOW
BLUE CHAIR CAFÉ, \$17 (ALL AGES)

as a classical guitarist, she often bucks the simplistic folk arrangements of her peers in favour of wildly veering and complicated music that still retains enough of a simple

melody that it's pleasant to listen to. Even though her new album—entitled *Champ*—might be a joy musically, her lyrics can often be a bit of a downer, but in that cheeky, Leonard Cohen type of way. That cheekiness, she says, is what gave the album its title.

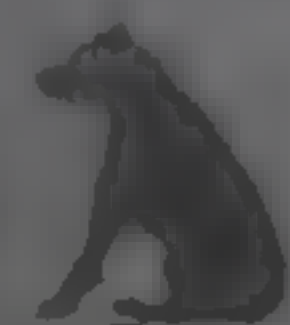
"The title *Champ* is a little bit ironic," she says, "because a lot of the songs are about being defeated or losing little battles." ♥

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REVUE / FRI, MAR 30 / AGAINST ME! / DINWOODIE There was a prevue of Against Me! in last week's *Vue*, detailing the specifics of the band's last show here in Edmonton. Basically, it was everything short of chaos, so I was pretty stoked for this return visit, and the night was truly everything a girl could've hope for, and more. These guys are the punk of punk, touring around North America before they make their way to Coachella this year. So was anybody surprised when the barrier collapsed at the Dinwoodie Lounge Friday night? I think not. There was no point to security; the band even went along with all of the impromptu duets, with kids climbing on stage and exiting with stage dives back into the crowd. Maybe I've been hit in the head by a wayward foot too many times, but I sincerely believe that only the best shows leave you with bruises. I just don't know how I'm going to explain it at work. —BARBARA CHUNG / barbara@vue-weekly.com

And then, Johnny Rucker belched

MEGAN HALL / megan@vueweekly.com

Local trio **At the Stroke of Madness** is proving that names can be deceiving. Though the band's moniker might fit a hardcore metal band, the trio's look is more suited to a folk group, with the acoustic guitar front and centre.

But when it hits the stage, At the Stroke of Madness grooves on loud rock 'n' roll music. Bassist/vocalist Steve Mardling describes the band's sound as being kicked in the teeth—but only better.

The band's songs, though, at the stroke of Madness is inspired by true events when it comes to songwriting. Mardling says that the two songs—"Tool" and "Johnny Rucker"—he wrote

PREVUE

SAT, APR 7 (8 PM)
AT THE STROKE OF MADNESS
WITH RAKE IN DUE TIME
STARLITE ROOM, \$10

on the band's soon-to-be-released debut album are both based on actual events he did his best to find humour in: the former is about a wayward ex-girlfriend with a wandering eye, while a musician who called himself Captain Nightmare was the inspiration for the latter.

CAPTAIN NIGHTMARE USED TO share the stage with At the Stroke of Madness at a local open mic night,

where his performance routinely consisted of him sitting on a chair, obscenely drunk. While he would play a little bit of guitar, his swearing and belching would inevitably take over the show.

"We hated going on after him," Mardling laughs, "because he would clear the room out for you."

It seems that the spirit of Captain Nightmare was lurking about whilst Mardling was laying down his vocals for "Johnny Rucker," channeling a burp through the vocalist. Since belching was a Captain Nightmare trademark, the group felt it was the perfect addition to the song he inspired and left it in the final mix. ▽

KIM BARLOW SPRING TOUR



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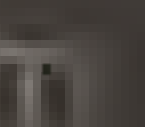
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Guelph's Constantines go through a Horsey Craze—doesn't everybody?

While it's true that the guys in the Constantines are known for their ambitious lyrics, slickly layered guitars and raspy shouted melodies, it is not such common knowledge that the content of the band's newest material was inspired by talk radio.

"Lately I've been listening to a national public radio broadcast from Chicago—an hour long weekly talk show," begins singer/guitarist Bry Webb. "It's interesting to hear people speak in their own words and how they tell a story. I like to hear stories told in different ways. The stories are inspiring."

Originating from Guelph, Ontario, the Constantines are taking those inspirations out on the road, trying out some new, faster licks before venturing back into the studio to lay

PREVIEW FRI, APR 6 (8 PM)
THE CONSTANTINES
WITH JON-RAE & THE RIVER, LADYHAWK
STARLITE ROOM, \$19

down their as-yet-untitled fourth record ("We don't have a name for the album yet," admits Webb. "I'm kind of superstitious about that kind of thing. You shouldn't put a title on anything that isn't done.").

THE CONSTANTINES IS NOT the only musical endeavour for any of the lads who make up the band. In addition to various side projects, they also go by the name of Horsey Craze, having released a shared, limited edition piece of vinyl with the Unintended.

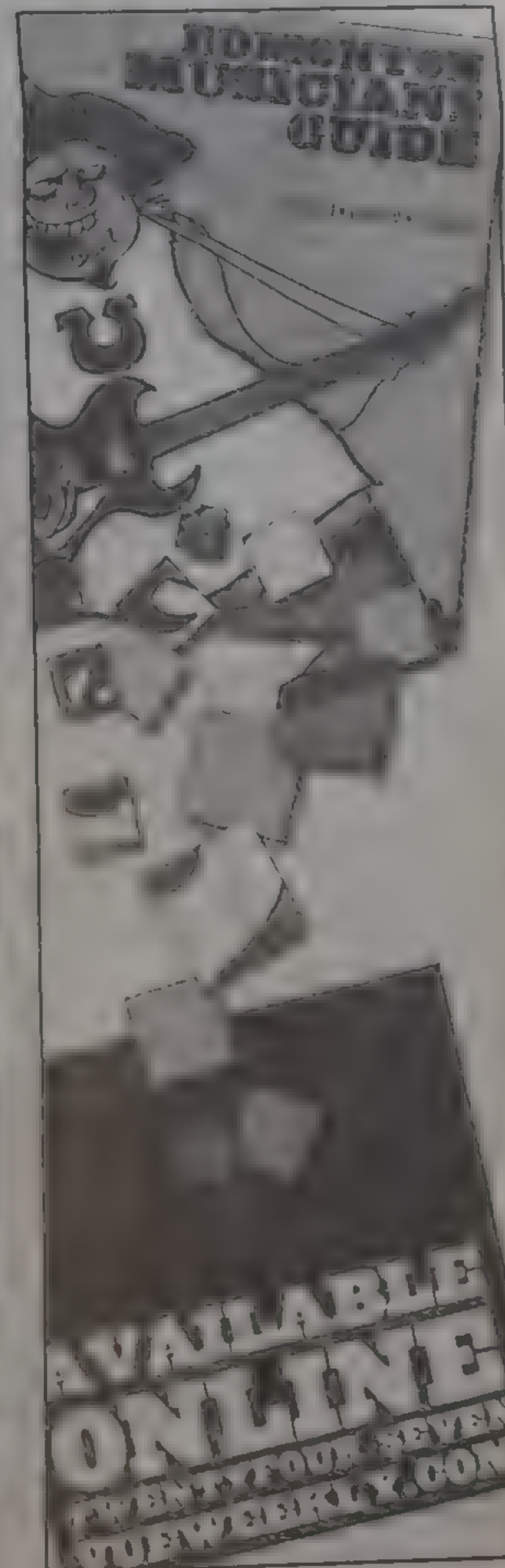
"Horsey Craze is just sort of a lark we came up with in a bar one night. We were on tour and we talked of


starting a Neil Young cover band," mulls Webb. "The idea was to start the band and then tour from Toronto to Mexico, only playing at open mic nights as a Crazy Horse cover band. That hasn't happened yet, but the band actually did materialize.

"The Unintended wanted to do a limited split record where they covered only Gordon Lightfoot songs," he continues. "It's incredible, they pull it off brilliantly. Eventually, they asked us to get together and play Neil's songs on the other side of the record.

"Sometimes it opens the creativity, playing with other people," considers Webb, before finishing. "The Constantines have had a crazy eight years—just gotten busier with each year. I like having my life on tour. I like driving—especially out West—and am just really excited about playing our new stuff." ▽

PREVIEW / FRI, APR 6 & SAT, APR 7 (8 PM) / A TRIBUTE TO THE SIDETRACK / ON THE ROCKS, \$5 "I'm pretty sure that the first solo show that I ever did was over at the old Sidetrack, and it was an experimental laptop show," says local musical explorer Lane Arndt. "That was one of the beauties of the Sidetrack—I wasn't pigeonholed—so I think I'm going to throw a bone in that direction and do some electro-folk." Arndt will be playing a selection of his own songs, a few covers and a little bit of instrumental guitar—backed up by his robots—when he joins a few other local musician-types for a tribute to the Sidetrack Café over two nights at On the Rocks, with the Neil MacDonald Band, Dave Babcock, Nervous Like Sheep and some surprise guests taking their turns up on the stage. The bar will be accepting donations for Change For Children, and you can forgo the cover charge if you bring an item to donate to WIN House. Check out the organization's wish list here: www.winhouse.org/donate.htm. —EDEN MUNRO / eden@vueweekly.com





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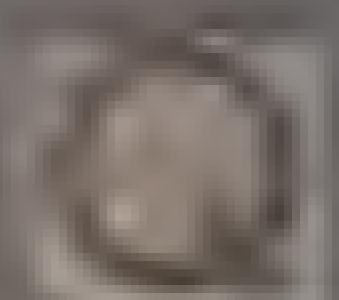


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Welcome to the unbearable cuteness of being My Robot Unicorn

CHRISTA O'KEEFE / marychrista@vuwweekly.com
 "I want to feud with Woodpigeon. I want to out-cute them!" Marshall Watson's declaration comes off about as threatening as a litter of small puppies play-fighting with your ankles, yet the auteur of the lo-fi musical project **My Robot Unicorn** is deadly serious about his mission statement, even through his broad grin.

The Edmonton-based writer and musician is usually on the same side as Calgary's Woodpigeon—he shares an inter-city band, Spreepark, with Woodpigeon's frontman Mark Hamilton, and Watson has been known to lurch onstage to add to their orchestral bliss-outs when in the same town. Yet perhaps in the realm of cute, as in so many other areas of life, there can be only one victor.

Watson's opening salvo to the feud is **My Robot Unicorn's** debut, *Living on the Edge of a Cliff*. The CD is a fetish unto itself—the cover lovingly screened, hand-stitched and numbered, a handsome vision in gold and black.

The musical contents, fables and foibles limned by gossamer acoustic meanderings, dainty melodic flourishes and Watson's earnest and unsteady voice, may reflect his bent for preci-

PREVIEW WED, MAR 11 (8 PM)
MY ROBOT UNICORN
 WITH THE ROBOT ATE ME, RUN CHICO RUN
 STARLITE ROOM, \$10

sion adorableness, but are also his handicap in the cute stakes.

You see, despite every tambourine shake, glockenspiel plink and banjo pluck delicately punctuating them, Watson's songs remain creased and rumpled with the wear-and-tear of life, usually anchored by a folksy chug of guitar.

IN EVERY SENSE of the phrase, it's a bedroom recording, written and shaped over one week in the middle of February almost exclusively by Watson. The uncompromising intimacy and cock-ups are all there, the imperfect crystallized and offered, palms open, to any takers.

"I like the lo-fi bedroom feel," he says. "I like that it's all me—the tone and feel seems more authentic."

Watson points out that he's involved in a number of creative collaborations, and *Living on the Edge of a Cliff* was created in part simply to honour his own aesthetic, a kind of "indulgence of self" rather than self-indulgence, an investment of personality instead of an



aimless coasting on it.

"The songwriting really happened when I just stopped trying so hard," Watson contends. "For lyrics, I started looking at the narratives I was working with in short stories. I'd take lines and narratives, nothing central to a

plot or anything, but these points that were resonant to me, to build up or strip down into these makeshift, dinky songs. It was fast—they all broke really quickly, in this way that was really organic and cathartic."

To translate his songs to a live set-

ting, Watson recruited Peter Sagar (of the soon-to-be missed Subatomics) to help him fill out his pop intentions.

"We don't know how exactly it'll work, but we know how the songs go," he offers. "Mostly, we'll just be really cute." ▽

SATURDAY APRIL 21ST

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A river of ideas runs through Jon-Rae

EDEN MUNRO / eden@vueweekly.com

The last time **Jon-Rae & the River** came through Edmonton, singer/guitarist/group-leader Jon-Rae Fletcher told *Vue* that the band was evolving under the influence of a new drummer.

"Our songs have changed so much," Jon-Rae said over the phone from his Toronto home. "The feel of our band has changed even. It's almost a Crazy Horse vibe now. It's more rocking than it was before... everyone's playing different. It revitalizes the songs."

And when the band hit the stage at the old-new Sidetrack Café, they were, well, pretty smokin', kicking up a storm and a half with their raucous soul music infused with, yes, the ragged glory-vibe of Crazy Horse.

That night, the band proved that, while Jon-Rae Fletcher might be the one with his name up there in the lights (or in print, or scrawled on some chalkboard marquee, depending on where you see it), there's no doubt that the rest of the players are just as important.

Co-vocalist Anne Rust D'eye was

PREVIEW

FRI, APR 6 (8 PM)
JON-RAE & THE RIVER
WITH THE CONSTANTINES, LADYHAWK
STARLITE ROOM, \$19

particularly stunning the last time, summoning up all sorts of soulful spirits with her singing and going head-to-head with Fletcher's voice, blurring the lines of lead and back-up, while the music stomped and rolled from side to side and all around them.

Back then, the band was working up to the release of *Knows What You Need*, but this isn't the sort of group that just puts together an album and then runs with it for as long as possible. Fletcher and his friends like to play, and they don't limit themselves to just one format.

"There is a choir on [*Knows What You Need*], but just on three songs," Fletcher remarks. "I do want to record an album of just piano and choir singing old hymns, and probably in a church."

THAT'S THE SORT of adventurous spirit that guides Fletcher: he thinks of something and then does it. Really,

why wait around for the perfect time when you can just move ahead? That's how stagnation is avoided and evolution happens.

"I don't necessarily try, it just happens," Fletcher explains. "Things progress, the band gets tighter, we've been playing together longer, I come up with horn parts in my head, I've got a bunch of friends who want to sing together so we form a choir. Things progress on their own."

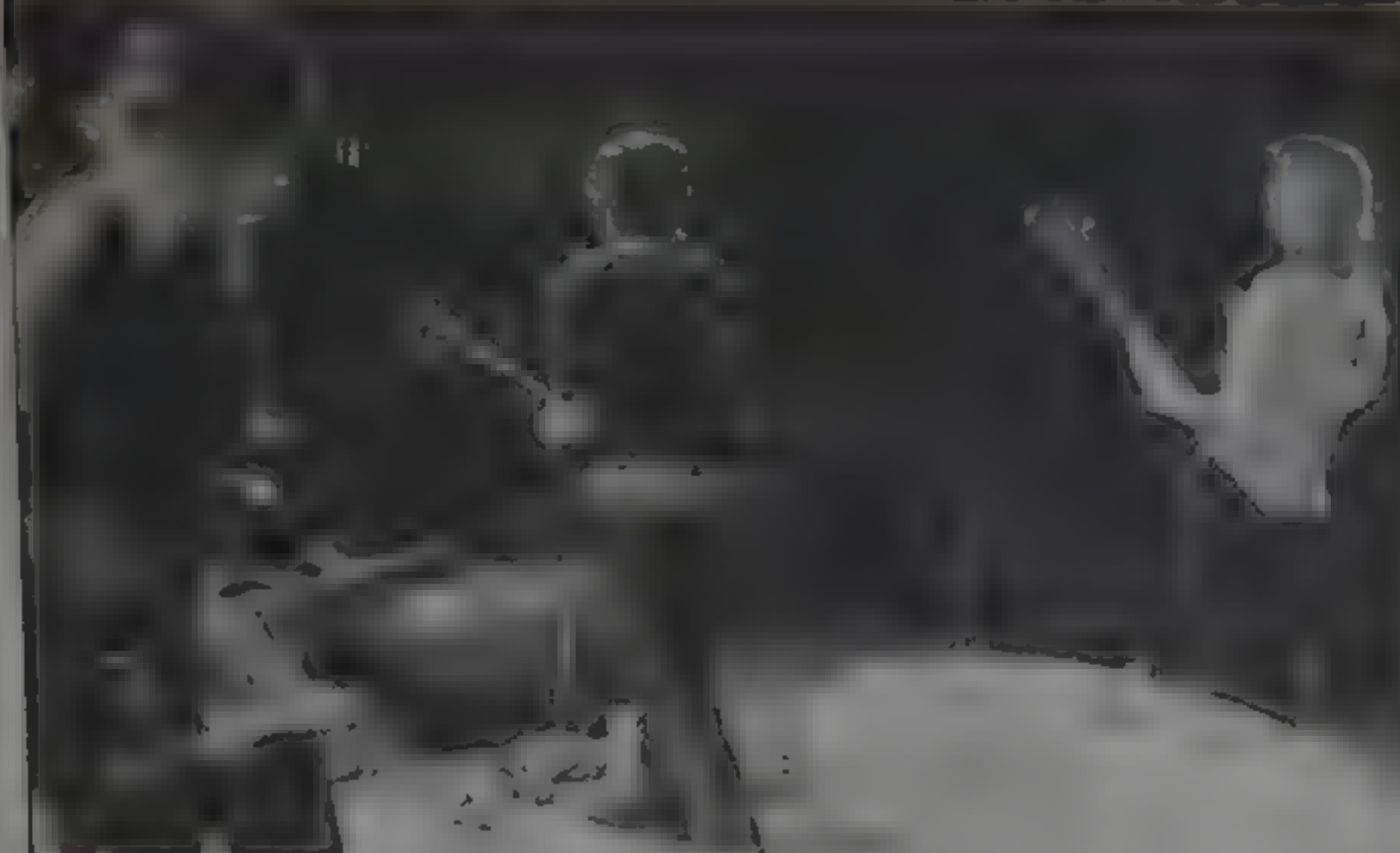
Fletcher admits that the band doesn't go for perfection in their performances, avoiding the tightly wound sterility that can so often ruin a performance, though he's quick to say that the musicians still have a high regard for both their own performances and the overall sound of the band. It's just that they all understand the songs—the structure and the direction—so they are able to move around within the tunes while still holding it all together—most of the time, anyway.

"It's great playing with the same people," he laughs. "It's not quite telepathy, but you can sort of guess what's going to happen next. It doesn't always work, though." ▽



REVUE / TUE, APR 3 / PRIESTESS / STARLITE ROOM I hadn't actually been planning to check out Montréal rockers Priestess's anticipated Edmonton engagement—not because I don't like the band, but because the show was scheduled for Tuesday, basically the least rock 'n' roll night of the week for us workin' types. But some friends presented a compelling argument ("Dude... Priestess is off I went, wondering if the band's popularity could bring out a decent crowd on a week night. I needn't have worried—maybe the city's longhairs and hipsters (an odd mix, actually, but the heterogeneous nature of the crowd should probably be taken as a testament to Priestess's quality) keep different hours than I do, or maybe they all have jobs that are easier to perform hungover than mine. Or, you know, maybe I'm just a big pussy. Whatever the case, the Starlite was packed from the moment openers Twin Fangs hit the stage, and by the time the headliners emerged with guns a-blazing and guitars a-wailing, the entire sweaty, hairy, heaving mass blanketing the venue's usually spacious dance floor was whipped into a frenzy, far drunker (or something-er) than any nice boys and girls ought to get on a school night. For most of the crowd, the party probably raged until the wee hours; personally, I was just happy the show wrapped up by midnight. Yeah, I'm a pussy. —ROSS MOROZ / ross@vueweekly.com

PREVUE / FRI, APR 6 (8 PM) / HIS SHAGGY CHORDS / WITH DARREN FRANK, DJ HUMBLEBY / VELVET UNDERGROUND. Still his Shaggy Chords from up to the neck's moniker on the debut EP, *Broad Gauge Chords*. For the recording, the band eschewed the big studio in favour of an iBook and some cheap microphones, a gamble that could have easily resulted in a disastrous wreck, it paid off, though, and there's a delightfully raw and unique sound to the disc, helped along by the fact that band's songs are well-written slices of grunge and psychedelic harmonies, while the performances are inspired and alive. —EDEN MUNRO / eden@vuwweekly.com



PREVUE / THU, APR 12 (8 PM) / THE CLINKS / THE POWERPLANT / \$3 The CLINKS is a PARTY BAND. —I dare my word for it. Girls who dress up like dudes and play music that sounds like Joan Jett but with some sweet disco beats mixed in. Plus, they cover Justin Timberlake's "Cry Me a River." What more do you want?

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ALBUM REVIEWS

NEW SOUNDS

BLONDIE
PARALLEL LINES
CAPITOL

MARY CHRISTA O'KEEFE / marychrista@vuweekly.com

Her stubborn brown roots and slouchy insouciance said CBGBs. Her platinum blonde mop of rock mullet bangs, white spaghetti-strapped jersey dress and tottering heels said Studio 54. The black lines said factory punk and pills. The white lines said disco and coke.

The year was 1978, and the Debbie Harry-fronted band Blondie was straddling two worlds, different but sympathetic to one another.

On *Parallel Lines*'s cover—an acknowledged iconic rock image, much referenced in the three decades since it was released—Harry makes the straddle literal, left foot defiantly planted on a white stripe and right one on checkerboard black. She connected the New York circuit.

It's a dancing record. Tightly layered sounds, punch and melody and theatrical vocal and musical flourishes make it easy to move a body without fear of betrayal from the song, no matter how stoned you are. Think of the breakneck, feral "Hanging on the Telephone" or "One Way or Another"; the fragile undone-ness of "Sunday Girl" and "Heart of Glass."

Looking back through the kitsch, it's hard to realize how fin de siècle disco actually was—in New York, much more apocalyptic a product than punk. The point was to dance, to fuck, to get stoned, to dance more. Because that flash in the sky wasn't dawn—it was the end of time. And in "11:59," the wrath and wastedness and beauty coalesce into one of Blondie's finest moments.

NEIL YOUNG
ON THE BEACH
REPRISE

EDEN MUNRO / eden@vuweekly.com

Neil Young played a solo acoustic show in 1974 at the Bottom Line in New York. This is what he said about making *On the Beach*: "We're in this motel room, we were trying some honeyslides. You know what a honeyslide is? That's just real poor grade marijuana. The worst you can get on the street. Put that grass in the grinder, get it real fine, put it in the frying pan, put it on the stove, turn the heat up a little, wait 'til that grass just starts to smoke, just a little bit. Take it off the heat—you don't want to burn it too much—then you take a half a glass of honey, just heat that honey right up until it's slippery, and then mix that grass with it. You mix those together with a spoon and then just eat it after that. Just eat maybe a spoonful or two. You'd be surprised, it just makes you feel fine. We were just sitting around, having a few honeyslides, and they slow you down quite a bit, you know. It's nothing to really get fast for anyway."

The resulting album is a great one, covering the distance between slow & mellow and slow & sinister, always covered in a thick haze of smoke.

THE ROLLING STONES
EXILE ON MAIN STREET
VIRGIN

ROSS MOROZ / ross@vuweekly.com

Just this week, Keith Richards admitted in an interview that, upon his father's death and cremation

in 2002, the seemingly-immortal Stones guitarist mourned by snorting a mixture of dear old dad's ashes and cocaine. Weird, huh? But this shouldn't really come as much of a surprise—I mean, this is the guy responsible for *Exile on Main Street*, arguably the most drugged-out album in the Stones' entire drugged-out catalogue.

And as much as the Stones are responsible for emphasizing the "sex and drugs" part of the sex-drugs-rock 'n'-roll trinity over the course of their whole career, Mick Jagger (while not teetotaler, to be sure) was always more so about the former than the latter. The mind-altering stuff was the domain of Sir Keef, and this is undeniably the most Richards-centric Stones album featuring by far his best effort as a lead vocalist—the infectious "Happy"—and some of the best of examples of his signature lazy-man two-finger five-string-open-tuned guitar work, especially on "Tumbling Dice." Impressive stuff, to be sure, especially considering any mortal man wouldn't have lived through even a fraction of the abuse Richards has done to his sinuses/liver/lungs/veins—shit, all of him, really—over the course of its recording.

BLACK SABBATH
SABOTAGE
WARNER BROS

EDEN MUNRO / eden@vuweekly.com

This should have been Sabbath's masterpiece, and it does come close—if you happen to have a vinyl copy of the LP, it features a nearly flawless side one. The opening screams and taps on a cymbal are annihilated by Tony Iommi's otherworldly guitar rilling on "Hole in the Sky," with Ozzy Osbourne throwing himself into the melody with no concern for preservation of his voice. The acoustic interlude that follows then gives way to the thrashing of "Symptom of the Universe," followed finally by the nightmarish "Megalomania."

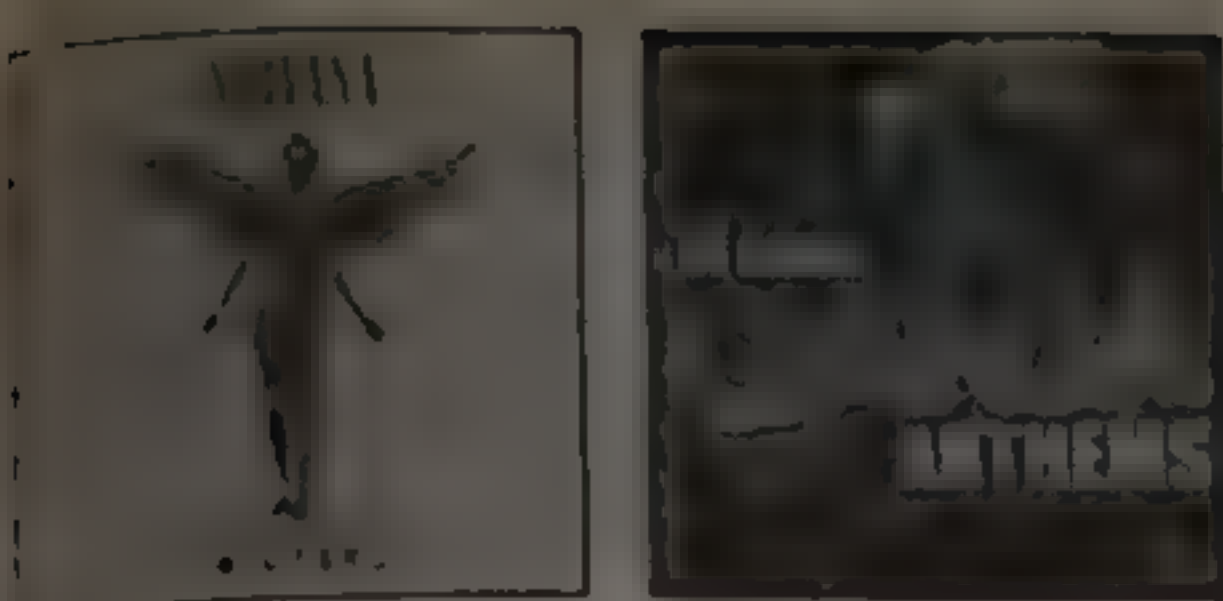
Side two starts off with a monster too, in "Thrill of It All," but then walk right into "Supertzar." In the foggy headspace that Sabbath was in back in 1975, maybe the idea of an instrumental guitar and choir piece seemed like a good one, but the result is awkward and amateurish on all counts. Likewise, the next track "Am I Going Insane (Radio)" doesn't do the LP any favours, meandering along on a bland synthesizer progression, winding up in a chorus that's simply and unforgivably boring. Thankfully, the band does pull together again for the closing track "The Writ," which swells up like a terrifying behemoth, Iommi's guitar and Osbourne's vocal simultaneously exploding out of a dark bass line. It's a wicked ending to a flawed album.

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top 10 sellers

01. neon bible arcade fire	06. living with the living ted leo
02. we were already dead modest mouse	07. hindu windmills elephant micah
03. myth takes !!!	08. fingerin' the devil sir richard bishop
04. drums & guns low	09. hindu windmills elephant micah
05. sound of silver lcd soundsystem	10. the third hand rjd2

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NIRVANA
IN UTERO
Geffen

BRYAN BIRTLES / bryan@vuwweekly.com

As some critics have pointed out, *In Utero* is really an album of two minds. Some songs were destined for MTV *Unplugged*, while others were brutal noise experiments, with nothing in between. Some have speculated that Cobain was sending a message that he wasn't going to be the pop star that everyone wanted him to be anymore, that he was deliberately trying to decrease his band's popularity. Others might tell you that the ravaging effects of heroin caused him to write an unlistenable album.

That's crap. *In Utero* is, in my opinion, Nirvana's best record. I prefer to look at *In Utero* as what should have been a transitional album for the band. The noisy songs represents the new direction the band was about to embark on, which you can hear in the recently released "You Know You're Right." Sure, it's more brutal than *Nevermind*, but all the quiet/loud pop elements are still there.

HI GRADE GANJA ANTHEMS
WAYNE'S PITHEATIS
GREENSLEEVES RECORDS

CAROLYN NIKODYM / carolyn@vuwweekly.com

I wanted to give this compilation a great review. I really did. The folks at Greensleeves Records obviously wanted to celebrate their 30th anniversary in style by releasing *Hi Grade Ganja Anthems*, because the record is home to some stellar tracks. Wayne Smith's "Under Me Sleng Teng" opens the album strongly with quintessential reggae stylings. The third track, reggae elder John Holt's "Police in Helicopter," gives us the war-cry lyrics "If you continue to burn up d herbs, we gonna burn down d cane fields." And Triston Palma is fully represented with a seven-minute version of "Joker Smoker" that meanders on through to dub in its last half.

Like the artists on the album, however, I have a difficult time separating my politics from my art. While anti-gay sentiment isn't overt on the record, it has found its way into the songs of a handful of *Ganja Anthems* artists. Because of this, I simply can't listen to the likes of Beenie Man, Sizzla, Capleton and Elephant Man, let alone get behind them as artists. I mean, these guys have recorded songs calling for the execution of homosexuals. And despite my love of reggae and the idea of ganja anthems, because of the inclusion of these kinds of musicians, I have to give the album a pass—and not on the left-hand side, either.

Dude, I'm hearing colours!

MUSIC
ENTER SANDOR
STEVEN SANDOR
sandy@sandyweekly.com

Remember cassettes and mix-tapes? Well, we have podcasts and iTunes' Party Shuffles, now. But it's not the same. So, to preserve my status as a 30-something rock curmudgeon, I am going to fantasize that I'm making a mixtape of my favourite rock 'n' drug songs.

1. "Non-Addictive Marijuana" by the Supersuckers. It's a song that runs the gamut from marijuana to cocaine to heroin. All tongue-in-cheek, mocking pot as the evil gateway drug.

"I wish we'd get more attention for that," Supersuckers lead-man Eddie Spaghetti told me in 2002 about the band's penchant for writing songs about drugs, murder and assorted vices. "I've always tried to write songs as provocative and offensive as possible, songs that are truly evil, but people like Marilyn Manson get the credit for all of it. But my songs are truly evil, not like some bands who sing about doing bad things but end it with some kind of qualifier."

2. "I'm Waiting For the Man" by the Velvet Underground. Lou Reed and company may have shocked more people in the '60s with "Heroin," but "I'm Waiting For the Man" is a grittier song about that desperate feeling junkies get before hooking up. "I'm waiting for my man / 26 dollars in my hand / Up to Lexington, 125 / Feel sick and dirty, more dead than alive."

3. "The Needle and the Damage Done" by Neil Young. It's a Canadian classic. "But every junkie's like a settin' sun," moans Neil in the close of the song. Depressing.

4. "Feel Good Hit of the Summer" by Queens of the Stone Age. Really, this is singer Josh Homme and a cadre of back-up singers listing off the names of drugs to some meaty metal riffs. But the way he yells "c-c-c-oaine ..." before a wall of guitar blows you away, it's a drug rush to itself.

5. "Sweet Leaf" by Black Sabbath. When I saw the reunited original Sabbath lineup at Ozzfest in Vancouver, as soon as the song began, Thunderbird Stadium was covered in blue pot haze. Somehow, thousands of people managed to hotbox an outdoor venue.

6. "Cocaine Blues" by Johnny Cash. This TJ Arnall song from the '40s had new life breathed into it when the Man in Black played this at his famous 1968 Folsom Prison show. It's got drugs. Murder. Jail.

7. "Sunday Morning Coming Down" by Kris Kristofferson. As with "Cocaine Blues," Johnny Cash made this song famous. But you can't have more than one appearance per artist on a mixtape. My rule.

8. "Revolution" by Mudhoney. As one half of Spacemen 3 and the leader of Spiritualized, Jason Pierce has made some of the most drugged-out music of the past two decades. When I asked him about drugs and their influence, he snapped. "It's kind of a lazy description of our music. It's not that transparent. Spiritualized has never been about drug use ..." Yeah, right. For that, I wrap up the tape with Mudhoney's infamous cover of Spacemen 3's "Revolution," with Mark Arm's scathing rewrite of the lyrics—in which he describes a methadone comedown. ▼

Steven Sandor is a former editor-in-chief of *Vue Weekly*, now an editor and author living in Toronto.

HAIKU!
CLASSIC DRUG ALBUM
QUICK SPINS
WHITEY AND TB PLAYER
quickspins@vuwweekly.com

GUNS N' ROSES
APPETITE FOR DESTRUCTION
Geffen
Five dirtbag junkies
Catch magic in a bottle
Never this good since

THE EAGLES
HOTEL CALIFORNIA
Elektra
Total shit sandwich
It reeks of ego, cocaine
And passed-out groupies

SYD BARRETT
THE MADCAP LAUGHS
Capitol
This is what happens
When you baste your brain in an
LSD cocktail

PINK FLOYD
UMMAGUMMA
Capitol
Self-indulgent scraps
Doom this to perennial
Dollar bin placement

THE DOORS
STRANGE DAYS
Rhino
Pre-bloat Morrison's
Acid-fuelled rantings over
Carnival weirdness

CHEECH & CHONG
UP IN SMOKE
Warner
'70s joke rock
From back when the term "gagger"
Was somehow funny

JEFFERSON AIRPLANE
SURREALISTIC PILLOW
RCA
Between bong hits
And epic acid trips they
Wrote two worthwhile songs

THE VELVET UNDERGROUND
WHITE LIGHT/WHITE HEAT
Verve
If it existed
They would man the main float in
The junk pride parade

GRATEFUL DEAD
PICK AN ALBUM, ANY ALBUM
Whatever
San Fran hippies ruled!
Sniffing Garcia's beard got
You high for 10 years

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CHAIR, SING OUT LOUD"
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BRYAN BIRTLES / bryan@vancouverweekly.com

Have you ever noticed that hipster fads come and go faster than you can say, "Welcome to 2006?" It seems like it was only yesterday that ninjas were the coolest thing to talk about on the internet, but since that time we've gone through zombies, robots and pirates. (As an aside, I predict that 2007 will be the year of the dinosaur, with Stegosaurus taking the lead.)

Interested in all of these creatures and more is California's **hellogoodbye**. The band seems to agree that dinosaurs will be the next big thing with the kids and included it as part of the title of their new album, *Zombies! Aliens! Vampires! Dinosaurs!* Though drummer Chris Profeta is aware of how "hip" such creatures are, he explains that the band chose them for a different reason.

"We put 'em on there because we like the *X-Files* and movies that involve them," he says, his voice an audible shrug.

FROM INAUSPICIOUS BEGINNINGS In 2001, hellogoodbye—rounded out by Forrest Kline on vocals and guitar, Jesse Kurvink on keyboards and Marcus Cole on bass—have lucked into being one of the most popular underground bands around. As Profeta explains, the band is well aware of the luck they've had and are very



PREVIEW

WED. APR 11 (6:30 PM)
HELLOGOODBYE
WITH BOYS LIKE GIRLS, THE HUSH SOUND
EDMONTON EVENT CENTRE, \$18.50 (ALL AGES)

grateful.

"There are bands that go out and work, and work, and work, and send demos and flyers and videos of themselves to labels and booking agents and managers and try really, really hard for their success and end up going nowhere," he says. "Then

there are bands that work really hard and get somewhere and then there are bands where it just happens for them and there's really no explanation why. It's definitely weird when things happen."

Things are happening so quickly for hellogoodbye that Profeta says the band often yearns to be off the road and snugly at home. The most important thing for the band right now, he says, is strong cellphone plans. "Hopefully on the same carrier as our girlfriends." ▼

ZODIAC THE ASTROLOGY

ROB BREZSNY
freewill@vancouverweekly.com

ARIES (MAR 21 - APR 19)

On Apr 1, 1976, British astronomer Patrick Moore told his radio listeners that a rare configuration of Jupiter and Pluto was occurring. So dramatically would it affect Earth's gravity, he said, that they might feel lighter than usual and perhaps even be able to float up into the air. I'm wondering if we can expect similar phenomena this week. There's a rare grand trine in fire signs, with Jupiter in Sagittarius, Saturn in Leo, and the sun in Aries. Especially for you, the buoyancy factor will be in full play, and levels of levity will be at a maximum. If you can't actually fly, you'll probably get higher than you've been in a long time.

TAURUS (APR 20 - MAY 20)

"It is by going down into the abyss that you recover the treasures of life," wrote mythologist Joseph Campbell. "Where you stumble there lies your treasure." Keep those thoughts uppermost in mind, Taurus. You've dared to crawl down into the abyss, and that's admirable. But now comes the most important part: your stumble. Be alert for every detail about it as the key to your future treasure.

SHOWING MAY 21 - JUN 20

Is the universe inherently friendly to human beings? The answer's got to be either yes or no. It can't be in between. Whatever you might be inclined to believe, you've got to agree that there's no way to know which is true with absolute certainty.

So, then, isn't it stupid and self-destructive to live your life as if the universe is unfriendly? Doing so tends to cast a pall over everything. But if, on the other hand, you proceed on the hypothesis that the universe is friendly, you're inclined to interpret everything that occurs as a gift, however challenging it may be to figure out its purpose at first. Your assignment this week, should you choose to accept it, is to live as if the latter theory were true.

CANCER (JUN 21 - JUL 22)

Depending on which surveys you choose to believe, the job satisfaction rate is either abysmally low or surprisingly high. Sirota Consulting, an attitude research company, found that 76 per cent of all workers like their jobs. But the Conference Board, a management advisory group, put the figure at less than 50 per cent. Wherever the truth may lie, you Cancerians have a great chance to skew the data upward during all of 2007. And you're now in a phase that offers the best possible opportunities for getting that prospect in full swing. I suggest you concentrate on upgrading your relationship to work in every way you can imagine.

LEO (JUL 23 - AUG 22)

This week features a spectacularly beneficent cosmic portent. Jupiter, Saturn and the sun are forming a grand trine in the fire signs. The last time this happened was 80 years ago, and while many uncanny redemptions will germinate during this electric grace period, not all will become immediately visible; some may even take years to reveal themselves. But there's one phenomenon that I suspect will show up vividly in the lives of many Leos: a

vision of how to restructure your life so as to express your unique individuality in the most creatively satisfying ways. Pay close attention.

VIRGO (AUG 23 - SEP 22)

The Dalai Lama, one of the planet's superheroes, was born during a rare grand trine of Jupiter, Saturn and sun in the water signs. This week those same planets will conduct an equally extraordinary grand trine in the fire signs. At the very least, I expect the birth of a sublime being whose benevolence will one day match the Dalai Lama's. I also suspect that millions of other wonders will hatch, a disproportionate amount of which will be engendered by you Virgos.

LIBRA (SEP 23 - OCT 22)

"Dear Rob: I'm wondering if you have any information about spirit husbands, especially about how to meet them and release them. Someone once told me that, before you can find your actual husband, you must first meet and release your spirit husband. —Lovesick Libra." Dear Lovesick: I confess I've never heard of "spirit husbands" before. But I do know this: you Libras are in an astrological phase when you'll have great success if you try to exorcise ghosts, fantasies, and projections that might be interfering with you having actual relationships with real soul friends and soul mates.

SCORPIO (OCT 23 - NOV 21)

"I am fragile, delicate and sensitive. That is my strength." The Indian spiritual teacher Osho said that, and I hope you will now make a similar vow. The power that you'll have available to you in the

coming weeks will be very different from the power that conventional wisdom admires. It will be a moral force that stems from your courage to be joyfully awake in the face of chaos, a luxurious gravitas that's rooted in your lucid vulnerability, a resilient authority that grows from your determination to meet every challenge with humble innocence.

SAGITTARIUS (NOV 22 - DEC 21)

One of my readers, Native American Ruth McLeod, reports that she has never mentioned the Easter Bunny to her young kids. Instead, she tells them about the Easter Coyote, the fun-loving, mischief-making spirit of spring whose job it is to hide goodies and play tricks, thereby lightening people's moods and getting them to take themselves less seriously. I expect that you'll soon be getting multiple visits from the Easter Coyote, Sagittarius. Prepare to shed the heaviness left over from March as you welcome amusing interruptions that will tweak your perspective in ways that make you smarter.

CAPRICORN (DEC 22 - JAN 19)

"When you argue with reality, you lose 100 per cent of the time," says teacher Byron Katie. So how do you cure yourself of the bad habit of arguing with reality? Love what is, she advises. Gladly and gracefully accept who you are and the life you've been given. But more than that, ask yourself whether the beliefs you have about who you are and the life you've been given are actually true. Let's say, for example, you've been infected with the belief that you'll never get the love you want. Is that an objective, rock-solid fact about reality, or is it a fearful fantasy? If

it's the latter, then you don't even have to argue with it. Just drop it.

AQUARIUS (JAN 20 - FEB 18)

Saturn and Neptune have been in opposition since August, and will continue to be until late June. Meanwhile, a grand trine in the fire signs is now upon us, featuring Jupiter, Saturn and the sun. To celebrate this auspicious portent, you should think hard about how you can communicate better. Make new connections and alliances that will serve your long-term happiness. Scheme about how to get your good ideas heard by people who can help you manifest them. And for extra credit, Aquarius, meditate on how to coordinate the opportunities afforded you by the fire trine with the creatively destructive possibilities offered by the Saturn-Neptune dance.

PISCES (FEB 19 - MAR 20)

Paul Revere was a hero in the Revolutionary War, renowned for the midnight horse ride he risked to warn American militias of an imminent British attack. After it was over, he sent a bill for his work to the local rebel organization, the Committee of Safety. Four months later he was finally paid, although with a sum lower than the one he invoiced. Let's compare these details to your imminent future, Pisces. First, I think that, like Revere, you should ask forcefully to be rewarded for your idealistic effort. But second, don't be crushed if in response you're treated as he was—paid late and in a smaller amount than you wanted. Third, there's a good chance you'll receive additional compensation from unexpected sources—maybe not exactly like Revere's lasting fame, but something of value to you. ▼

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CLUBS/LECTURES

CANADIAN NATIVE FRIENDSHIP CENTRE 11205-101 St (479-1169) • Basketball, every Mon (5-7pm) • Healing Circle, every Mon (6-8pm) • Boxing, every Mon/Thu (7-9pm), every Tue (5-7pm) • Volleyball, every Tue (6-8pm) • Sewing Circle, every Tue (6-8pm) • Beadwork Class, every Wed (6-8pm) • C.N.F.C. How-wow, every Wed (6-9pm) • Hip-Hop Class, every Thu (5-7pm) • Crane Class, every Thu (6-8pm) • Elders and Residency, every Fri (all day) • Safe Using and Harm Reduction, last Fri each month (11am-12pm) • Tobacco Reduction, every Fri (1-2pm) • Drop-in Night, every Fri (6-8pm)

CITIZENS' FORUM ON THE ALBERTA TAR SANDS Allendale Community Hall, 6330-105 A. St (989-3802) • Meeting every 2nd Sun (7-9pm); sponsored by the NDEnvirocaucus • \$2

CONVERSATION CAFE Unity of Edmonton Church, 11212-106 Ave • Meeting presented by Rev. Yvonne Racine • Every Tue (1-3pm)

CULTURAL PLANNING SESSIONS (424-2787) • Be a part of Edmonton's arts and culture planning • **Spruce Avenue Community Hall**, 10240-115 Ave; Thu, Apr. 12 (7:30-10pm) • **West Police Station**, 16505-100 Ave; Sat, Apr. 21 (2-4:30pm) • **Clareview Arena Hall**, 3804-139 Ave; Mon, Apr. 30 (7:20-10pm) • **City Arts Centre**, 10943-84 Ave; Thu, Apr. 19 (7:30-10pm) • **Grand Trunk Board Room**, 13025-112 St; Tue, Apr. 24 (7:30-10pm) • **South Division Police Station**, 104 Youville Drive East; Sat, May 5 (2-4:30pm) • Pre-register by phone or by e-mail to culturalplan@edmontonarts.ab.ca

AN EVENING WITH DOG THE BOUNTY HUNTER NAIT Arena (471-8855) • Featuring Duane Dog Chapman from the show *Dog The Bounty Hunter* • Thu, Apr. 12 (7:30pm) • \$10 and \$20 (student) available at the NAIT Students' Association Office (Rm. E-131) and The Nest Restaurant and Bar; \$19.99 (public) at TicketMaster

GREAT EXPEDITIONS—HOSTEL TRAVEL Hostelling International, 10647-81 Ave (454-6216/455-6741) • Slide presentation by Jay Smith on the World Social Forum in Nairobi, Kenya (2006). Slide presentation by Sylvia Krogh on a Kenya and Tanzania safari (2006) • Apr. 9 (7:30pm)

THE GREYING NATION CONFERENCE Shaw Conference Centre • *The Greying Nation Photographic Exhibition* features photographs by Dr. Orest Semchishen and Dr. Mark Nowaczynski open until Apr. 7 at Edmonton's City Hall • www.capitalhealth.ca/grayingnation

ILLUSIONS SOCIAL CLUB Roost, 10345-104 St (387-3343) • Crossdressers, transsexuals, friends and supporters meet the 2nd Thu each month (8pm); http://groups.yahoo.com/group/edmonton_illusions/

IMAGES ALBERTA CAMERA CLUB Allendale School, 6415-116 St (489-9776) www.imagesab.ca • Meets every 2nd and 4th Thu (8pm) each month featuring presentations, speakers, workshops, outings, monthly and year-end competitions. Photographers of all levels are welcome • \$40 (individual membership)/\$50 (family)/\$20 (full-time student); visitors may attend three times before joining

LISTENING THROUGH LENT: THE 'WORD' MADE MUSIC Star of the North Centre (459-5511) • With Della Dennis • Until Apr. 17 (7-9:30pm)

LOVE IS IN THE AIR Rutherford House, 11153 Saskatchewan Drive, U of A Campus (422-2697) • Cocktail party hosted by matchmaker Elizabeth MacInnis of Real Connections • Apr. 12

MAITREYA'S PRIORITIES: SHARING JUSTICE AND PEACE Stillpoint Healing Centre, 11209 Jasper Ave (452-9388) • Lecture by The Edmonton Transmission Meditation Network • Mon, Apr. 9 (7pm) • Free

MEDITATION • Gaden Samten Ling Tibetan Buddhist Meditation Society, 11403-101 St, www.gadensantenling.org (479-0014) by Kushok Lobzang Dhamchoe; beginner Tue (7pm); intermediate Wed (7pm); advanced Sun (11am-1pm) • **Grubba Karmur World Spiritual Organization**, 208-10132-105 St, (425-1150) www.tbkwo.org; Raja Yoga Meditation

ONE WORLD WORSHIP—EASTER VIGIL St. Andrew's United Church, 9915-148 St (452-4454) • An alternative worship experience based on the texts, rhythms/melodies of the world-wide Christian community especially South/Central America and Africa • Apr. 7 (6pm)

PAGAN PATHWAYS 2007 Stanley A. Milner Library • Featuring 4 talks, presentations and Pagan authors • Apr. 7 (8am-5pm)

PARENT TALK (481-1292) Boys and Girls Clubs of Edmonton offers support groups and workshops for parents at various city locations

PESTS IN THE CITY TELUS World of Science, Margaret Zeidler Star Theatre (452-9100) • Presentation by Milton Davies, part of the insect series: D & A to follow • Apr. 14 (2pm)

A PHILOSOPHY FOR LIVING SGI Culture Centre, 10711-107 Ave, 2nd Fl • A Buddhism lecture series • Wed, Apr. 18 (7-9pm) • Free

ROBERT GERN—ART TALK Stanley A. Milner Library Theatre (downstairs), 7 Sir Winston Churchill Sq • Artist lecture by Robert Gern, presented by the Alberta Society of Artists with the Edmonton Public Library • Thu, Apr. 17 (7pm) • Free

SELF ESTEEM SUPPORT GROUP (436-5830) • For women who are experiencing chaos as a result of a life crisis and who feel isolated • Group meets each week

SUPPORT FOR GRIEVING TEENS West End Pilgrims Homecare, 9808-148 St (413-9801, ext 308) • Weekend retreat for teens between 12-17 who have experienced the loss of a loved one • Apr. 13-15

TOASTMASTERS CLUBS • City Lights Toastmasters Downtown (426-5882) Set your own pace to become a comfortable and confident public speaker; meetings every Tue (noon) • **Chamber Toastmasters Club**: Chamber of Commerce, 600, 9935 Jasper Ave (459-5206); Visit us and learn how to deliver effective presentations, conduct business meetings, and devel-

op as a communicator and a leader, every Thu (8pm) • **Worship**: Beverly United Church meeting room, 11919-40 St (478-6963) Improve speaking skills, leadership skills, time management, organizational, listening and social skills, every Wed (7-9pm) • **Paranetic**: Best Western Cedar Park Inn, 5116 Gateway Boulevard (457-0808) www.paranetic.org; weekly meetings to improve your communication and leadership skills in a supportive environment every Wed (7-9pm) • **Chanticleer Toastmasters**: Kingsway Rm, Millard Health Building, 131 Airport Rd (498-4808/474-1138) Thu meetings (7-8:30 am) feel confident speaking and build leadership skills

TOURETTE SYNDROME Academy of King Edward, 8525-101 St, North door (1-866-824-9764) • Support meetings for TS adults and parents of TS kids • First Wed each month (7pm)

VEGETARIANS OF ALBERTA Riverdale Hall, 9231-100 Ave • Monthly potluck, guest speaker at 6:30pm, bring a vegan, vegetarian or raw food dish for 6 people, your own plates and utensils • Sun, Apr. 8 (5:30-7:30pm)

WASKAHEGAN TRAIL ASSOCIATION • (968-2504) Free guided hike, approx. 9 km at Trappers Lake, meet at the MacDonald's at Abbottsfield Mall, 30 St, 118 Ave; Apr. 8 (9am) • Free guided hike, approx. 9 km at Saunders Lake; Apr. 15 (9am); meet by the Bonnie Doon Recycle, 85 St, 85 Ave

WOMEN IN BLACK In front of the Old Strathcona Farmers' Market • Silent vigil every 1st and 3rd Sat ea month, stand in silence for a world without violence (10-11am)

QUEER LISTINGS

AFFIRM SUNNYBROOK—RED DEER Red Deer (403-347-6073) • Affirm welcome LGBTQ people and their friends, family, and allies, meet at Sunnybrook United Church every 2nd Tue ea month (7pm)

AGAPE Faculty of Education, U of A Campus • Sex, sexual, gender differences in education and culture focus group • Contact Dr. Andre Grace (andre.grace@ualberta.ca) for info

BISexual WOMEN'S COFFEE GROUP http://groups.yahoo.com/group/bwedmonton • Social group for bi-curious and bisexual women • 2nd Thu ea month (7:30pm)

BOOTS AND SADDLES 10242-106 St (423-5014) • Large tavern with pool tables, restaurant, shows. Members only

BUDDY'S NITE CLUB 11725B Jasper Ave (488-7736) • Open nightly 9pm-3am, Fri 8pm-3pm • Sun: Rotating drag shows with Mz Bianca and Mz Vanity Fair in The Stardust Lounge and GoDiva and Donatella NE1 in The GoDonna Show, DJ WestCoastBabyDaddy • Mon: Amateur strip contest with Mia Fellow, midnight, DJ WestCoastBabyDaddy • Tue: Free pool and tourney, DJ Arrowchaser • Wed: Hump day with DJ Sexy Sean • Thu: Wet underwear contest with Mia Fellow, midnight, DJ WestCoastBabyDaddy • Fri: We made 'em famous! DJ Eddy Toonflash, come early to avoid lineup, no cover before 10pm • Sat: Undie night for men only, free pool and tourney, DJ Arrowchaser

DOWN UNDER MENS BATH HOUSE 12224 Jasper Ave (482-7960) • Open 24/7 • www.gayedmonton.com

EDMONTON MUSIC NIGHT • A mature social group, couples and singles welcome • E-mail edmontonmusicnight@hotmail.com

EDMONTON PRIME TIMERS (EPT) Unitarian Church of Edmonton, 10804-119 St • A group of older gay men and their admirers who have common social interests meet every 2nd Sunday of most months at 2:30pm for a social period, a short meeting and a guest speaker, discussion panel or a potluck supper. Special interest groups meet for other social activities throughout the month, email edmontontpr@yahoo.ca, www.primetimerswww.org/edmonton

EDMONTON RAINBOW BUSINESS ASSOCIATION www.edmontonrba.org • Monthly after business mixer: Network and share contacts in the GLBT business community • Second Wed ea month

HIV NETWORK OF EDMONTON SOCIETY 300, 11456 Jasper Ave (488-5742) or contact7@hivedmonton.com • Programs and support services for people affected and infected by HIV/AIDS and related illnesses: Counselling, referrals, support groups, harm reduction, education, advocacy and public awareness campaigns

INSIDE/OUT U of A Campus • Campus-based organization for lesbian, gay, bisexual, trans-identified and queer (LGBTQ) faculty, graduate student, academic, straight allies and support staff • 3rd Thu ea month (fall/winter terms); Speakers Series: Contact Kris (kwellis@ualberta.ca)

LIVING POSITIVE 404, 10408-124 St, www.edmlivingpositive.ca (1-877-975-9448/488-5768) • Providing confidential peer support to people living with HIV • Every Tue (7-9pm); Support group • Daily drop-in, peer counselling

MADELINE SANAM FOUNDATION Faculté St. Jean, 8406 Marie-Anne Gaboury (91 St) Rm 3-18 (490-7332) • Program for HIV/AIDS prevention, treatment and harm reduction in French, English and other African languages • Every 3rd and 4th Sat (9am-5pm) • Free (member)/\$10 (membership) • Pre-register

MAKING WAVES SWIMMING CLUB www.geocities.com/makingwaves_edm • Recreational and competitive swimming with coaching, beginners encouraged to participate. Socializing after practices • Every Tue and Thu

PRIDE CENTRE OF EDMONTON 9540-111 Ave (488-3234) • Open: Mon-Thu 1pm-10pm, Fri 3-10pm • Bears Movie Night: Bears Club, last Sun ea month (1-5pm, TV room) • Trans Education/Support Group: Support and education for transsexual, transgendered, intersexed, two-spirited and questioning individuals; 1st, 3rd, last Tue ea month (2-4pm) with Cody • Sunday Night Men's Discussion Group: Mens social and discussion group; every Sun (7pm); Rob Wells at robwells780@hotmail.com • Friends and Family Playgroup: 2nd Sun ea month (2-4pm) with Noelle, friendsandfamilyplaygroup-owner@yahoo.com • Monday Movie Night: Movie nights with themed movies and discussion afterwards; every Mon • TTIQ Alliance: Support meeting for transgender, transsexual, intersexed and questioning 2nd Tue ea month; ttiqualliance@shaw.ca, 718-1412 • GLBT Seniors Drop-in: Every Thu (2-4pm) with Jodi Bovee, 488-3234 • Sick and tired of being sick and tired? Cocaine Anonymous meeting; Thu, 7-8pm; CA Hotline 425-2715 • HIV Outreach: Drop-in circle every other Thu (7pm) • Youth Understanding Youth: Youth support and social group; every Sat (7-9pm); yuy@shaw.ca; www.members.shaw.ca/yuy • Suit Up and Show Up-Big Book Study; Sat (12-2); sunupshowup@hotmail.com • NDR LGBT Census: last Sun ea month with Jay, 488-3234

PRISM BAR AND GRILL 10624-101 St, back entrance (390-0038) • Lesbian and gay bar/restaurant

THE ROOST 10345-104 St (426-3150) • Open Thu, Sun 8pm-3am; Fri Sat 8pm-4am; closed Mon, Tue, Wed • Thu: Thursdays are Gorgious with Hostess Hootie McBoob, featuring Drag Kings and Queens, burlesque and amateur strip the last Thu ea Month • Fri: All Request Dance Party every Friday, DJ Jazzy

with rotating shows every week • Sat: Always a New Years Eve; with DJ Dan (retro) downstairs and DJ Jazzy (new music) upstairs • Sun: Flashback Sundays: Featuring hostesses Miss Bianca and Vanity Fair, rotating guests, Free pool all night long; \$3 cover • Weekends: \$4 (members)/\$6 (non-member)/Sun \$2 cover

SINGLE LESBIANS 40 PLUS • A woman's social group, gathers once a month on Sat for conversation over tea and coffee • Information e-mail: singlewomen40plus@hotmail.com

STEAMWORKS 11745 Jasper Ave (461-2554) • Steamworks Open Daily (24hrs)

WOMONSPACE (780-482-1794) • A non-profit lesbian organization, organized activities held monthly including licenced non-smoking dances, coffee houses, family events, games nights, golf tournaments and more • www.gaycanada.com/womon-space, e-mail: womonspace@gmail.com

WOODY'S 11723 Jasper Ave (488-6557) • Open Daily (noon) • Sat-Tue Karaoke with Tizzy and Patrick • Sat-Sun Pool Tournaments

SPECIAL EVENTS

AUSTRIA BOUND—EDMONTON RHYTHMIC GYMNASTICS Coast Terrace Inn, 4440 Gateway Blvd (429-9925/435-9516) • Fundraising dinner with Rhythmic Gymnastics presentations, the operatic comedy of the ProTenors, a silent auction, and dancing with DJ Rudy Electro • Apr. 14 (6pm) • \$45

EASTER CARIBBEAN GOSPEL CONCERTA East Glen High School, 11430-69 St • Featuring Gerry Thompson, Berean Calgary King's Men, and Brother Danny More. Presented by The Berean Church of God and Vision of Truth Outreach Ministry • Sat, Apr. 14 • \$25 (adv)/\$30 (door)/\$15 (children under 12); proceeds to support the outreach ministry of the Edmonton Berean Church of God

HOMAGE TO VIOLETA PARRA—VIOLETA LEGENDARIA Royal Alberta Museum, 12845-102 Ave (914-6574) • An evening of songs, poetry and dance—a tribute to one of the most covered Latin American singer-song writers. Presented by the Gabriela Mistral Latin American Spanish School • Apr. 7 • \$12 (adv)/\$15 (door)

NCJC FEST Avenue Skatepark, 9030 118th Ave • Skateboarding, flea market, show and live music • Apr. 7 (1pm) • \$6 (1-5pm)/\$12 (all day)/\$12 (5pm, bands) available at Avenue Skatepark, Acoustic Drumshop (Whyte)

ONE WORLD MARKET Rosedale Hall, 10135-96 Ave • Featuring handmade silk clothing accessories and decor from Shanghai and Hand-woven textiles from Guatemala, and potter from Honduras • Apr. 14-15 (10am-5pm)

OUTING THE RACIST STEREOTYPES Stanley Milner Library, 7 Sir Winston Churchill Sq (438-7332) • Council of Canadians of African and Caribbean Heritage (CCACH) • Sat, Apr. 7 (6-8pm) • Donations

RELAY FOR LIFE OPEN HOUSE Foote Field, 11601-68 Ave • Apr. 12 (5:30-8:30pm)

STORIES BETWEEN OUR FINGERS International Centre, University of Alberta (903-4265) • Youth Vision Movie Production • Apr. 20, 5pm • Tickets available in advance

UNITE THE CHILDREN Rosslyn Community Hall, 11015-134 Ave (473-1555) • Fundraiser dinner for children of war torn countries in Africa and the Middle East • Sun, Apr. 15 (6:30pm) • \$20

KARAOKE

BAR-B-BAR 4249-23 Ave (461-2244) • Every Thu and Sat (9pm); James, Mr. Entertainment • Every Sun (7pm); James, Mr. Entertainment

BILLY BOB'S SPORTS BAR Continental Inn, Stony Plain Rd (484-7751) • Every Wed (8pm-12am); every Thu, Fri, Sat (9:30pm-1:30am) with Right Said Ed

CAMELOT SPORTS BAR 10231-95 St (425-4298) • Every Sun (8pm-12); with Jeannie and Bruce

CASTLEDOWNS P UB 16753-100 St • Every Tue (9pm-1am); with Off-Key Entertainment

CHRISTOPHER'S PARTY PUB 37 Millbourne Rd (462-6565) • Every Tue (9pm); with Sonia, Prosound Productions

CROWN AND ANCHOR 15277 Castledowns Rd (472-7696) • Every Thu

ECCO PUB 9605-66 Ave (435-5050) • Every Mon (9pm); with Sonia, Prosound Productions

O'CONNOR'S IRISH PUB 9013-88 Ave (469-8165) • Every Thu (9pm-1am)

ON THE ROCKS 11740 Jasper Ave (482-4767) • Karaoke Mondays. Every Mon (9pm); Hosted by Mr. Entertainment's Scott Parsons • Salsa and the City Thursdays: Latin music and Salsa lessons, every Thu (9pm)

ORLANDO'S 1 15163-121 St (457-1649) • Every Wed/Thu/Sun (9:30pm-2am); with TLC Entertainment

PEPPERS Westmount Mall, 135 St, 113 Ave (451-8022) • Every Thu (9:30pm-1:30am); with Gord from Stonerock Productions

RATT 2-900 Students' Union Bldg, 8900 114 St, U of A (492-2153) • Hey, What Are These Times Called? Name That Tune every Tue with Colin Krieger • Karaoke, baby, every Wed (9pm); with Colin and Darrell

ROSARIOS 11715-108 Ave (447-4727) • Longest running Karaoke bar, 7 days a week

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SANTANNAS 17930 Stony Plain Rd (481-7625) • Every Wed, (8pm-12); with Jeannie and Bruce

SILVER MARTINI 10668-156 St • Every Sat (9pm-1am) with HotSound

SPORTSWORLD INLINE AND ROLLER SKATING DISCO 13710-104 St (472-6336) • Every Tue, Fri-Sat (7pm-midnight), Sat-Sun (1-5pm)

THORNEY HOTEL • Every Sat (9:30pm-1:30am) with Prosound

X-WRECKS LOUNGE 10143-50 St • Every Wed (7:30-11:30pm) with Sonia, Prosound

YESTERDAY'S 112-205 Carnegie Dr, St. Albert (459-0295) • Every Thu (9:30pm-2am); with Off-Key Entertainment

ZAKS ON 51ST AVENUE 10525-51 Ave (432-5853/436-5047) • Karaoke Night: Every Fri (10pm-2am) **FRANCO'S PUB** 14059 Victoria Trail (478-4636) • Every Thu-Sat (9pm-2am); with Jeannie and Bruce

Feel like some Facebook time?

QUEER TOTALLY GAY

LUKE FOSTER

totallygay@vuwweekly.com

Luke is male, Luke is interested in men.

Luke is listed as in a relationship.

Luke is now friends with Rachael C.

Luke wrote on Josh W's wall.

Luke has been tagged in a photo.

Luke is listening to music.

You were poked by Luke Foster.

Facebook is ruining my life! For those not in the know—that is, essentially anyone over the age of 26—Facebook is a website that is sweeping the continent right now, slower than AIDS but undoubtedly more viral. Like many other social networking sites such as Nexopia, on Facebook you post a profile of yourself along with a profile picture, your current status, a list of interests, personal photo albums and the like. You can add friends to your profile, post messages on their walls, send messages and annoying “pokes” to people just so they know you’re thinking about them. What makes this particular site different, however, is that through a newsfeed you are informed of everything that happens in your network of friends. When someone makes a new friend, writes a message on someone’s wall or says or does anything, really, you know about it—or, rather, you are compelled to learn more about it.

If that makes little to no sense and you’re already finding yourself bored with the rather specific issue I’ve chosen to explore this week and unreceptive to the universally applicable messages that shall arise from my exploration of the present topic (whew!), then, well, talk amongst yourselves. The New Pornographers are neither new nor pornographers. Discuss.

MY PRESENT DETESTATION of Facebook is ridiculously complex in nature. It’s not because I’m wasting too much of my otherwise valuable time on the website when I should be doing more important things like homework or writing or feeding my dog instead. I’m always doing things that aren’t important. That’s not the issue.

The concept behind Facebook is, well, the same as the idea behind a yearbook, only updated on a hourly basis. You can be kept abreast of your current circle of friends, which is what I use it for. I know that whatever’s happening to my pal Leon in Toronto and to my friend Iris in Boston is much more interesting than what’s going on in boring (not to mention rampant with fatal knifings) Deadmonton. Then again, I’ve become way more involved in my friend’s lives than I should.

What I find fault with is that Facebook is not only connecting your present, but reconnecting you with your past, a recurring theme over here at Totally Gay as of late, if you haven’t noticed. Anyone from your old high school, your hometown or your old job can type in your name, come across your profile and add you as one of their friends. Friends my ass.

I’ve never been one familiar with internet etiquette, but in reality, if a smelly, barely literate hockey player I used to go to school with who I have no real pleasant memories of wants to be my friend, I would simply say, “Who the fuck are you?” On Facebook, you have to either confirm or reject someone who wants to be your friend. And as both a gay person and someone with impeccable manners, I just can’t fundamentally reject someone like that with the click of a mouse.

Perhaps if the choice was to accept or decline, I wouldn’t feel like such a jerk. Or even better, a button labeled “Are you sure that you want to be friends with Luke Foster? Really?” Or even better: “Are you sure that Luke Foster wants to be friends with you? There’s a reason we fell out of touch, or never touched in the first place. If I wanted to reconnect, I’d call your mom and ask for your number. She always liked me more than you did anyway.”

This kind of activity is seriously rocking the carefully conceived social constructions I’ve created and referenced over the years. Basically, the cool kids only hang out with the cool kids, the weirdos stay indoors together during recess and the gay kids suffer through being in the middle and grow up to be well-mannered, well-dressed productive members of society. Now the cool kids want to be friends with me (So do the weirdos, but what else is new?). It’s worse, actually, being reminded of the people I was friends with. Yuck.

And initially I thought Facebook subverted the rest of the internet sites my gay brethren (and sisthren?) seem so content to use for, shall we say, making different kinds of friends. It’s harder to maintain a façade because of the constant visible dialogue; you can post tons of different items on your profile and it honestly doesn’t appear to be used solely for cruising purposes. But it’s still not honest. When you’re on Facebook, you’re not in front of a person, you are wires away behind a computer and can still carefully modify your content and appearance. I suppose I’m naïve, thinking that Facebook could reflect reality more than it actually does. If it was, this is how it would read.

Luke is now friends with the girl who he fooled around with a couple times in high school who apparently no longer resents him for his homosexuality.

Luke wrote on Josh W's wall some inside joke that makes it seem like he's funnier and more interesting to complete strangers.

Luke has been tagged in a photo where he's (fake) stealing a framed photo of Kristi Yamaguchi from the Royal Glenora.

Luke is really not listening to music so much as he's scanning the internet for free porn in between writing his weekly column.

You were poked by some guy you've never met before ... and not in the good way.

Luke is not impressed. ▼

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you want to renew or cancel please phone Glenys at 426-1996/fax 426-2889/e-m glenys@vueweekly.com or drop it off at 10303-108 St. Deadline is noon the Tuesday before publication. Placement will depend upon available space.

Robert Gonn Art Talk: free artist lecture on **Thu, Apr. 17, 7pm** at the Stanley A. Milner Library Theatre (downstairs), 7 Sir Winston Churchill Sq.

Short Film Needs Crew: Short Drama shooting in Edmonton at the end of April needs crew members contact: mike@bankholdupdesign.com

Aspiring actress looking for starter roles in theatre/film, caucasian, 22 yrs, brown hair/eyes. mrs.nightingale@gmail.com.

Seeking Actors and Technicians. Motion Picture Arts at Red Deer College. Apply online www.rdc.ab.ca/performing_arts

Open Audition for a late summer Film and Numerous Murder Mysteries. All ages (18-70) **Thu, Apr. 12, 7pm** at Ramada Hotel 5359 Calgary Trail, (Gateway Blvd.)

Open dance auditions for the 2007/08 school year. Vimy Ridge Academy Professional Dance Program, **Sat, Apr. 14, 5-6:30pm.** 450-2100 or e-mail: admin@esbdance.com, www.esbdance.com.

Call to Enter: **ArtHub Studio Gallery** features guest artists. Incl: Proposal; 10 slides/photos; CV; Artist statement. For info Ph Tim 423-2966.

WANTED: makeup artists, clothing, hair stylist for creative work. Looking to submit to local and international magazines. Darren@wolfphoto.ca 780-686-1111.

Allied Arts Council Centre for the Visual Arts. Spruce Grove, Alberta, are currently seeking artists interested in becoming members. www.alliedartscouncil.com or phone 780-962-0664.

Heart of the City Festival Auditions: All ages and varieties of performance welcome! **Apr. 19, 5-9pm** and **Apr. 21, 11am-8pm.** Boys and Girls Club of Edmonton, 9425-109A Ave. Call Mike to book your time 975-8791.

SEEKING: actors and stage crew to perform bilingual play from 'A to Z'. Meet bi-monthly. Improvisation friendly. Submit resume (English with photo) to: amateurplaywrite2007@gmail.com

Uptown Folk Club Songwriting workshop with Paul Hann. Apr. 21 at Norwood Legion. \$10 (members), \$20 (non-members)

MUSICIANS

Cosmopolitan Music Society: If you played in any of Cosmos's bands, or sang in the chorus please call Darlene at 432-9333, e-mail cosmomusic@shaw.ca.

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ANDREA NEMERSON
altsex@altsexcolumn.com

DEAR ANDREA

I was on antidepressants for a year and just came off them recently. It was a situational depression: my close sister had died and I have no other psych history.

I've always fantasized about being submissive but never seriously acted on it. But since I've been off the medication, I've experienced an intense surge of sexual desire. I've since developed an online relationship with someone where I am his sex slave/toy. I find it so erotic!

I feel I'm about to go out of control, though. I need to either find a safe place to act out my fantasies and/or go to counselling. How do women who want to be submissive slaves do so safely? What the hell is wrong with me?

LOVE, BEWILDERED

DEAR BEA

Nothing that isn't wrong with a few million of your fellow perverts, so I wouldn't get too exercised about it if I were you.

Furthermore, I'm sorry to hear about your sister, and not particularly alarmed to hear about your long-distance slavey thing. Good for you for finding him, actually. The perv world abounds with would-be submissive sex toys, while tops are, of course, always in short supply, topping being both labour-intensive and highly skilled, while bottoming can be done in one's sleep. Then again, I suppose it is so very much easier to type, "I flog you. I flog you some more. I am still flogging you ..." than it is to actually flog someone that cyber-tops like yours really have no excuse not to get with the flogging.

BEFORE YOU FRET TOO MUCH that your newly awakened libido is going to grow to monster proportions, break free and stomp all over town like Godzilla, swallowing

subway trains and getting all tangled up in the overhead power lines, don't. It's normal for a sex-drive suppressed by sadness and SSRIs to come roaring back to life when exposed to air again.

Moreover, S & M, well, it does that. Early in one's career as a self-professed kink, one tends to go a little overboard, thinking about it constantly, reading everything, joining everything, buying everything, posting unwisely to the internet and insisting on sharing with anyone foolish enough to have briefly expressed even polite interest in your new hobby.

You, by contrast, are remaining admirably discreet (it's not that I think there's anything to be ashamed of, just that there's no reason to tell your dentist and your grandmother's bridge club about it). You are taking it fairly slowly, keeping yourself to yourself, and having the safest supposedly dangerous sex imaginable, the kind that isn't even really happening. Either you're not out of

control in the slightest, or you aren't telling me the whole story. I'll have to go with the former.

Of course, there are safe ways to be somebody's submissive sex toy, just as there are safe ways to go deep-sea diving or take up the flying trapeze—good equipment is key but finding a good instructor comes first. It doesn't sound like the online guy is going to become your off-line guy any time soon, nor need he. You're in the joining things phase (this usually passes, so you might as well take advantage now), so join something.

Not so easy, I know, if you live in a small town, or no town, but seriously, the exurbs are no place to be a sex slave (S & M porn abounds with isolated *schlosses* full of depraved aristocrats and with isolated farms full of sick, sadistic rednecks with barns full of cowed sex-slaves, but real life does not). You need to join one of the social/educational clubs you'll find in most big cities now. They have meetings

and get-togethers and swap meets. Hell, some have *brunch*, which always makes me laugh because I just can't think of anything less edgy than brunch, but what could it hurt to have some coffee and a muffin and meet some nice people who like to do nasty things? This is how your modern freakazoid finds her tribe.

There may be nobody there you'd ever consider submitting to, body and soul (there almost certainly won't be) but somebody will know somebody you *will* want—and, even better, they'll know if he's safe.

Besides urging you out into the daylight, I also support you in staying home and lurking about the more *louche* corners of the internet. Acting out your fantasies online is actually a great way to find out what actually interests you, and no hard feelings if you just don't feel like finishing a certain session because you don't like his manner. Or his grammar.

LOVE, ANDREA

MUSICIANS

Guitar/bass/songwriter looking for Vocalist and musicians for recording and house gig project. Old School R&B jazz/funk format. No children please. Send info to: ssyrenne@hotmail.com or call 668-9224

Funky style bass player seeking guitar player with experience in funk rhythm. Must be from Leduc. j.r._mint@hotmail.com

Experienced hard rock band seeking pro level bass player with vocal skills. No beginners/hacks/egomaniacs. Band experience mandatory. Henri (780)634-2156.

DEAD JESUS is currently looking for extraordinary drummer for the upcoming metal onslaught. Looking for serious and committed. Call evlglen 780-905-8722.

VOLUNTEER

Media help wanted for a Nonprofit Boot Camp. Call 39-0521 or kindnessinc@myway.com

Volunteer teachers needed to teach English as a second language to newcomers to Canada. Orientation and training provided. Meet people from all around the world. Jason: jmarkowsky@cci-tex.ca or 944-0792.

Have you ever thought of volunteering with your pet? Pet therapy is a great way to help those in our community. Call Deanna at 413-4682.

Urban Farming Project—Immigrant Seniors / SAGE are looking for garden spaces in many areas of the City. If you have land that you would consider for this project please contact us. Maureen Elhatton E. melhatton@MySage.ca, T: 423 5510 ext 340.

Secure the Cure 2007 Alberta Diabetes Foundation's Family Fun Run and Walk. Sat, June 9 at Broadmoor Lake Park, Sherwood Park. Register at 447-1451; events@afdr.ab.ca; or visit www.afdr.ab.ca.

The Canadian Cancer Society's 6th annual Relay for Life on May 25-26 7pm-7am. Visit www.cancer.ab.ca/relay or call (780) 455-7181 for info.

Edmonton May Week Labour Arts Festival: Looking for volunteers to help with the planning and presentation of events, outreach and fundraising. www.mayweek.ab.ca for info.

CANADIAN LIVER FOUNDATION is looking for enthusiastic volunteers for presentations and special events. Call Carmen at 444-1547.

Volunteer Drivers needed for the Seniors Volunteer Driving Centre, 2-3 hrs Mon-Fri. Ph Anna 732-1221.

Help to broadcast news for blind and print-restricted Edmontonians. Email: edmonton@voice-printcanada.com, or call 451-8331.

Tired of Smoking? Come join us at Nicotine Anonymous. 7pm, Wednesdays at Ebenezer United Church, 163 St, 106 Ave, call Gwynn 443-3020. 7:30pm, Sundays at Henwood Treatment Centre, 18750-18 St, call Ryan 990-8917 or Jo 479-5969.

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Cassandra: Hot Hungarian brunette; 36C-26-36; 25 yrs; tight, toned, tanned; super fun; call for availability; 965-4968.

Amber: Outgoing redhead; just 18; brand new to the industry; 34B-26-32; very open minded; call for availability; 441-1330.

Chrissy: Sexy hot Italian w/jet black hair; very busty; 23; ask her about special; call for availability; 441-1330.

Mae-Ling: 20 yr old Asian; great body; loves to pamper; no rush service; a delicate oriental gem; call for availability; 965-4968.



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JAMES MORRISON

THE FEELING



UNDISCOVERED

At the young age of 22, James Morrison's debut cd, "Undiscovered", entered the UK charts in the #1 position, and for good reason. On "Undiscovered", James Morrison proves himself as the very definition of the term "raw talent". Recalling the days of genuine 60's soul music are the irresistible songs, "Pieces Don't Fit", "Wonderful World", and the album's first single "You Give Me Something". James Morrison, "Undiscovered" is indisputably one of the best albums to come out of the UK in 2007.



TWELVE STOPS AND HOME

The Feeling's debut album release "Twelve Stops And Home" has reached double platinum success in the UK, and were the most played band on UK radio in 2006! Great big no-nonsense, hook-filled, giant-chorused pop music - music for the masses, only intelligent, with sunshine hooks and killer choruses that everyone can hum, from plumbers to professors. This album is an instant classic.



MYTHS OF THE NEAR FUTURE

Klaxons' debut release "Myths of the Near Future", featuring the single "Magick", is creating a flurry of attention and expectations to music lovers worldwide. In just over a year into their existence, kids love them, dress like them and go glowstick-wielding mental at their gigs. Their "nu-rave" sound is ruling the UK. Rolling Stone says "Klaxons...have been anointed leaders of a new rock revolution". This is a dance album like no other, and a must have for every music lover.

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